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The Times Literary Supplement

August 23 1985 Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX

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Principal and rear elevations of an Adam design for a proposed "house in the castle style at Bewley, Kiltarity, Beaulieu, Invernesshire, for Simon Fraser, Master of Lovat, M.P."; taken from *Designs for Castles and Country Villas* by Robert and James Adam by Alistair Rowan (160pp. Phaidon, £55.07/48 22787).

On modesty and boldness

Henry Gifford

LAZAR FLEISHMAN
Boris Pasternak v tridtsatye gody (Boris Pasternak in the Thirties)
444pp. The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem. \$30.
965 223 562 8

Lazar Fleishman's previous book, *Boris Pasternak in the Twenties* (reviewed in the *TLS* of December 18, 1981) was remarkable for its deployment of evidence from many quarters to reveal Pasternak existentially, as he lived through a critical decade. The decade that followed, even more critical, is harder to investigate, as Professor Fleishman explains in his masterly introduction. During the 1920s a certain binocular vision of Soviet affairs was still possible. The two halves of Russian culture, in the Soviet Union and abroad in the émigré circles, had not yet been finally severed. But in the 1930s isolation from the West was enforced with increasing rigour. Politics cast an uglier shadow upon all the arts, including music (in 1936 Shostakovich was harassed for his "formalism", and soon a heavy barrage fell on writers too for the same offence). Throughout the 1930s we glimpse Pasternak as a problematic figure. Unlike Anna Akhmatova, he had not been ostensibly silenced, though after 1933 he wrote little verse of his own. Nor had he been relegated, like Mandelstam, first to the confines of literature and then to the limbo of internal exile. Instead, he found himself an unwilling candidate for the "vacancy" left by the suicide of Mayakovsky in April 1930.

For one so prominent as he was, it is surprising how much has still to be inferred about his circumstances and the motives for particular thoughts or actions in this period. The autobiography he wrote in 1956 is reticent with regard to the 1930s, and there are not many of his letters yet available, apart from the valuable correspondence with his cousin Olga Freidenberg which Elliott Mossman has edited. There is a handful of memoirs, but one of the most privileged, by Olga Ivinskaya, earns a reproof from Fleishman for being highly undependable. Besides these Akhmatova and Nadezhda Mandelstam have left some illuminating anecdotes. Fleishman had to rely

more than he might have wished on the Soviet press of the 1930s - to piece together from reports in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* and elsewhere what Pasternak said at writers' meetings, and to recover a few statements he sent himself to the press, which had earlier been overlooked. Equally important was the task Fleishman undertook of surveying the acres of critical controversy in this period about Pasternak and his significance for Soviet poetry. All of them he has tramped through, on a journey resembling that of Zhivago after the civil war through famine and desolation. His patience and the reader's are rewarded when these imperfect lights can be used to reveal what Pasternak had to endure and how he achieved his "safe conduct".

Fleishman makes a contrast - at the risk, he says, of perhaps simplifying a little - between Pasternak in this period and two other poets of his generation, Mayakovsky and Mandelstam. The ordeal of Mayakovsky is common knowledge. He could not wholly subdue his formidable and very self-willed talent to the service of the Communist Party. RAPP (the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers), which was the Party's favoured instrument in his last years, bore hard on such independence as he still kept for himself; he lost the struggle, and shortly before his death capitulated by joining the organization. Mandelstam's path was equally tragic, though he accepted the tragedy with a deliberate calm, telling Akhmatova in 1934 that he was "ready for death". His way, as Nikita Khrushchev in particular urges, was one of the poet's freely chosen martyrdom for the truth. Pasternak followed a third course, which Fleishman is able to present as not unreasonable when the pressures of the moment are understood.

Gorky and Bukharin were keenly aware, like Pasternak whose parents lived in Germany, of the threat posed to European culture by Hitler's coming to power in January 1933. They wanted to save that culture by creating a new "socialist humanism" in opposition to the Nazi barbarians. When RAPP was abruptly dissolved in April 1932, steps were taken to set up a single all-embracing Writers' Union, the first Congress of which opened in August 1934. Stalin and Gorky wanted this Union but had quite different views of its role. For Stalin it would be a means of establishing complete control over literature; for Gorky it could band

together the writers in a loyal opposition (and Bukharin went so far as to speak privately of a plan he and Gorky had to form the intellectuals into a second party). Pasternak's own attitude at the beginning of the 1930s is defined by Fleishman as alternating between "cooperation with life as it is" - the broad policies of the régime - and the impulse towards "revolt". Such an impulse should be held back when necessary. That was a particular reason for his disapproval of Mandelstam's satire on Stalin, which he considered not only crude but untimely, in view of the Nazi menace. Pasternak's "drama", as Fleishman notes was that he insisted on measuring the events of the time in the Soviet Union by "the ideal and criterion" of the Revolution as he conceived it, even when the vision and the reality could no longer be reconciled. The vision was doomed to fade for Pasternak too; but his hope of a creative freedom under socialism was encouraged by the prospect of reforms, and by a few gestures towards liberalism. Stalin carefully nurtured such hopes. The famous Constitution of 1936 turned out to be a magnificent fraud; but it was not fraudulent for Bukharin, who claimed to have written it all himself, with some help from Radek.

In retrospect, and forgetting the sense of things for Pasternak and his contemporaries, we may be inclined to judge him severely for being so hopeful. Surely there had been ample proof, even before the dire 1930s began, that Stalin's régime could never accommodate a poet of his character. In 1929 he had witnessed, and held aloof from, the savage attack upon Plinyak and Zamyatin. Sent on a "brigade" tour to the Urals in 1931, he withdrew as early as he could, having found there nothing but "organized mediocrity". At the end of that year he told a writers' conference that "the time exists for man, and not man for the time". Fleishman draws attention to his statement in a letter to Olga Freidenberg that early in 1932 he had tried to poison himself. But after RAPP's disappearance a thaw began in the literary world. Outside there was mass misery, with millions of dispossessed "kulaks" starving; and repression was growing. But in the summer of 1933 a more liberal policy began to show itself. This was widely attributed to the influence of Gorky. Pasternak knew well enough what suffering continued in the country, yet he still

found it possible at this time to believe in the "rightness" of the Soviet experiment. Its harsh features, in Fleishman's view, he could then account for as imposed by "the events in Nazi Germany and the attitudes of Europe".

In the middle years of the decade, against his will, Pasternak stood at the centre of Soviet literary politics. Yet this was a lean period for his art, until he began to translate Georgian poetry. Titsian Tabidze and Paolo Yashvili, two of its leading practitioners, were his personal friends. He admired the Georgians for the defence they made of their inherited culture. At the Writers' Union Congress in 1934 his interest in Georgia was shared, though for quite other reasons, by the assembled delegates. They treated the Georgian contingent with deep respect, as the world significance of their literature dawned suddenly upon one and all. Pasternak's fine translations did confirm the excellence of such a poet as Tabidze. They had one surprising outcome. He had translated, with little option, one supposes, to do otherwise, two panegyrics upon Stalin, one by Yashvili. The oriental floridity of these set the fashion, not only for Russian poets but for poets throughout the Soviet Union, to outdo them in fulsomeness.

Pasternak's own relations with Stalin were, of course, crucial for him. One high point, often discussed, was the famous telephone conversation of June 1934, when Stalin rang up Pasternak to hear his views on Mandelstam, then under investigation. Bukharin had appealed to Stalin on Mandelstam's behalf, adding that Pasternak was "anxious" about him. Fleishman handles this episode with extreme care and sympathy. He points out that Pasternak felt at the time rather estranged from Mandelstam, and was also aware that Stalin would like to find out whether he had known of the incriminating poem, and if so why he had not reported it. Later he thought, after Bukharin's fall, that perhaps the conversation had been a test also of Bukharin's loyalty, though it seems Pasternak was the real object of interest. He was bitterly disappointed when Stalin lost patience with his tangential replies and rang off. At this time, as a poem of 1936 makes clear, Pasternak believed that a foremost poet and the national leader could meet one another as equals, to discuss the most serious issues facing the new order, and only later did he see that the conversation never could be re-

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Boris Pasternak with his family; reproduced from Moses Nappelbaum's *Our Age* (145pp. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 0 88233 514 5).

sumed. By 1937 his disillusion became total. In December 1935 Pasternak wrote gratefully to Stalin for having proclaimed Mayakovsky to be the best poet of the epoch: it saved him, he said, from the inflation of his own significance. At the Writers' Congress in the previous year Bukharin had made an important speech on poetry and poetics, in which he stressed the individuality of Pasternak and his right to that individuality. Bukharin may not have appreciated the most characteristic work of the poet — *My Sister Life*, for example — any more than Gorky did, but Pasternak represented for him the ideal of a poet loyal to the régime yet honourably maintaining his independence as an artist. From that moment, every debate on poetry led up to the question of Pasternak. His critics, friendly or covertly hostile, wanted to remould him as a civic poet on correct Soviet lines, coaxing or threatening him out of his harmful idealism and preoccupation with his own feelings. Pasternak listened, when he was present, but made no secret of his view that a poet's primary allegiance must be to art and to the truth of art.

This could have been extremely dangerous for him, as speakers more than once hinted. But Pasternak did not lose his nerve, although he became ill and depressed in 1935, particularly at the time of the International Congress in Defence of Culture in Paris, where his reception by the delegates left him glaringly prominent. After Klov's assassination in December 1934 the situation for writers steadily worsened, culminating in the Great Purge of 1937, with show trials, continual denunciations, mass arrests, and the breaking of the intelligentsia. Pasternak more than once showed exceptional bravery. He would not denounce André Gide's *Retour de l'URSS*, on the pedantic plea that he hadn't read the book; he refused to call with other writers for Marshal Tukhachevsky and his associates to be executed; he wrote to the wife of Bukharin in 1937 saying he had no reason to doubt her husband's innocence of the charges against him. While friends and enemies alike were falling on every side, Pasternak seemed to bear a charmed life. Just when the wolves were closing in, the journal *Otkryt* which had hitherto ignored his poetry published an article on Pasternak. Its author, was a little-known

journalist named not inappropriately Izgoyev (Izgoyev means "outsider"), and he must have been authorized at the highest level to deal so gently as he did with the outsider Pasternak. Izgoyev dissociated him from the crimes of Bukharin and Gide, with each of whom the poet had been in sympathy, and prescribed for him the modest role of translator specializing in poetry from the national republics. A translator Pasternak became, of impressive range and power (ironically, he had earlier set his face against the occupation), while working quietly on the first drafts of *Doctor Zhivago*. Two decades later the novel would and his avoidance of the foreground in a blaze of publicity.

Fleishman has conducted a defence of the poet which may occasionally look like special pleading until one has seen the evidence he is able to bring. We learn from this book to watch out for the latent opposition in Pasternak's seeming acts of conformity. More than once he will be found to have followed his own purposes while apparently falling in with the general movement. The attempt to write more simply which he made in these years would seem to align him with all his colleagues who were scared of "Formalism" and anxious to satisfy the new mass readership. But Pasternak, as he made clear in 1936 at a meeting of writers in Minsk, was guided by a subversive example. His speech at the conference, "On Modesty and Boldness", attacked the high-flown verbiage of Socialist Realism, contrasting it with Tolstoy's downright vigour in his exposure of shams. Pasternak's modesty was often ironic, but it derived too from his sense of being the instrument of a higher power. The boldness in its sanity and strength was Tolstoyan.

This sequel to *Boris Pasternak in the Twenties* fully maintains the high standard of its predecessor. The reader will gain from it an excellent grasp of Soviet literary politics in a decade of great significance for Russian literature. That Russian literature came through was owing to a few poets and prose writers who placed its survival above their own. Pasternak was more fortunate than any of these, but he took whatever risks were necessary, and his record is finely vindicated in this sober definitive study.

The form of the conflict

Sidney Monas

PETERSEYFFERT

Soviet Literary Structuralism: Background debate issues
387pp. Slavica Publishers Inc, P.O. Box 14388, Columbus, Ohio 43214, USA. \$17.95.
0893571407

JU. M. LOTMAN and B. A. USPENSKIJ
The Semiotics of Russian Culture
Edited by Ann Shukman
341pp. Ann Arbor: Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, The University of Michigan. \$15.
0939942565

ALEXANDER D. NAKHIMOVSKY and ALICE STONENAKHIMOVSKY (Editors)
The Semiotics of Russian Cultural History: Essays by Iurii M. Lotman, Lidia In. Ginsburg, Boris A. Uspenski
229pp. Cornell University Press. \$29.95.
0801492947

Since the death of Stalin, the Soviet doctrine of Socialist Realism as an approach to the arts has become less of a stultifying monolith. For the past fifteen years, the Soviet establishment has even managed to tolerate a kind of loyal opposition, known as the Moscow-Tartu, or Russian structuralist, school of literary and cultural criticism. This limited and still highly qualified tolerance is the more remarkable in that the structuralists show clear ties and affinities with the abolished and anathematized literary movement of Russian Formalism, with the "bourgeois" Prague Linguistic Circle of the 1930s, and even (if more tenuously) with French structuralism.

Although Yury Lotman, the most energetic, talented and versatile member of the group, has taken some pains to dissociate himself from the formalists, this has been more of a tactical manoeuvre than a repudiation. Nevertheless, a genuine critique of formalism and an attempt to transcend its limitations is very much a part of the Moscow-Tartu project. In this, Lotman and his associates take up the legacy of Mikhail Bakhtin, not only his concepts of "dialogism" and "heteroglossia", but above all his critique of the formalists and their failure to connect literature as a system with other systems operative in culture and society. V.V. Ivanov, linguist and literary scholar, one of the very early members of the school, was the man most responsible for the publication of Bakhtin's *Rabelais* and the second edition of his book on Dostoevsky in the 1960s. But Bakhtin was neither precise nor systematic enough for the structuralists, and they strongly emphasized the formalists' search for the "specificity" of literature, or "literariness", and their strenuous efforts at professionalism and systematic knowledge.

The exceptionally fruitful, at times startlingly original approach of the school has been embodied in a series of summer schools at Tartu University in Estonia — much of the work of which was published, albeit in very small editions — and in a regular series of publications known as the *Trudy po znakovym sistemam* ("Works on semiotics"), eighteen of which have so far appeared. By no means all the contributors have been literary scholars or critics; indeed, linguists, musicologists, art historians, ethnographers, cultural historians, sociologists and even mathematicians have added to the richness of the brew. If the vocabulary tends to have at times a too insistently "scientific" flavour, this is less often the case than with their French counterparts.

The Moscow-Tartu group is doing what Marxist critics have always stated literary scholarship should do: demonstrate convincingly the connection between the ideological sphere and its social base, a task which more orthodox and "Soviet" critics have shown themselves incompetent to perform. In this rationally persuasive reconciliation of literature and life the Moscow-Tartu group extends and deepens the limitations of both traditional Socialist Realism and Formalism. In addition, the group's ascendancy with the talented young challenges vested academic literary interests, and the prestige of science serves in part as a shield.

Peter Seyffert's account of the group's history, which originated as a thesis, is long-

winded, repetitive and poorly focused, compared to Ann Shukman's *Literature and Ideology*, it is heavy going. But it does make an important point. Historically, the Moscow-Tartu group owes its existence to the Soviet Union's need to "catch up" in the field of cybernetics, machine-translation, information theory. Behind Stalin's ease, which, though doctrinaire, opened a relative ideological freedom to the study of language and literature, stood two linguistic braves as they were learned — V.V. Vinogradov and A.S. Chikobava. Later figures who played a more direct role in the development of structural semiotics are also treated in some detail in Seyffert than in the more elegant work of Shukman. Seyffert clarifies the historical circumstances of the group's emergence, but his work cannot place Shukman's as an account of what the group attempts to do.

In general, Ann Shukman, and the neo-formalist group with which she is associated, have done more than anyone to translate, explicate, and make available the most important work of both the Formalists and the Moscow-Tartu group to an English-reading audience. Editor of the series *Russian Poetics*, *Translation* (Holden Books, Oxford), her volumes have appeared to date, including formalist essays from the 1920s as well as contemporary structuralist works and the *New Literary History* (IX, Winter 1978, devoted to Soviet semiotics and criticism). Shukman has now put together a volume of thirteen essays by Yury Lotman and Boris Uspenskiy to commemorate Lotman's sixtieth birthday, with the co-operation of both authors.

The essays are virtuoso performances in the application of structural semiotics. Now purely literary in the sense of dealing only with a literary text. The distinction of the method that it treats literary texts and certain patterns of everyday life analogously — i.e., as *langue* in Saussurean terms, it relates such acts of poetry to a common cultural code, or *langue*. If traditional Socialist Realist critics tended to treat literary characters as real-life personages, Lotman and Uspenskiy tend to study historical figures and the historical milieu in which they acted by a method derived from the systematic scrutiny of literary texts. Some of its attributes have already become fairly well known: the seeking out of significant oppositions, especially "binary oppositions", tracing conflict and reversal while at the same time noting the persistence of structural relations, to single out its most prominent features.

Most of these essays deal with Russian cultural history of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries — a place and time in which the impact of literature on the formation of culture was especially marked. A number of themes are illuminated whose persistence and importance for an understanding of present-day Russia are apparent: the dualism of the Russian culture, the significance of literature and theatre for political behaviour; in general the form that political and cultural conflicts tend to assume as opposed to their particular socio-ideological content. While the contemporary Soviet Union is referred to only fleetingly, the significance of the themes dealt with by Lotman and Uspenskiy for contemporary Soviet life would pass no intelligent reader by.

The volume edited by the Nakhimovskys contains three essays by Lotman and one by Lotman and Uspenskiy jointly. All four appear as well in Shukman's volume. *The Semiotics of Russian Cultural History* contains a foreword by Lotman, an introduction by Boris Gasparov, himself a member of the Moscow-Tartu school, and an essay by Lidia Ginsburg, not usually associated with the group, though written very much in the spirit; "The 'Human Document' and the Formation of Character". For these additions alone the book is worth its price. The translations in both volumes are competent. Ginsburg, neither Lotman nor Uspenskiy, is an elegant stylist in Russian, but both pride themselves on the use of a precise and compelling vocabulary, which the translators, though there are some differences between them, have all been at pains to duplicate.

Over shooting

Paul Johnson

ALEXANDER DALLIN

Black Box: KAL 007 and the Superpowers
130pp. University of California Press. £14.25.
0520 055152

There are innumerable unsolved mysteries of the sea and, since long-distance travel by air became the norm, a growing number of air mysteries too. The destruction of the Korean 747 airliner in September 1983 was only half a mystery. We know what happened to it, because US electronic intelligence tapes recorded the instructions of Soviet ground control to their interceptors to shoot it down, and the Soviet authorities, after a series of initial lies, admitted they had done so. But they maintain to this day that the plane was on a spying mission and that their action was a proper response under their frontier defence law of 1982.

What we do not know is how the KAL craft got over Soviet territory. Broadly speaking there are three possible positions. First, KAL 007 made a navigational error and the action of the Soviet authorities in destroying this innocent, if errant, aircraft with the loss of 240 civilian lives is typical of their paranoia and contempt for human life. That is the position taken by the Reagan administration and (I believe) by the overwhelming majority of airline pilots. Second, KAL 007 was, as the Soviets allege, engaged in some form of spying and the Soviet response, though brutal, is understandable, whereas US administration comments are hypocritical in the extreme. That is the position taken by hard-left intellectuals and other conspiracy theorists. The third position is a more open one, veering between the two and concluding that a satisfactory explanation of

the incident has not yet been provided.

Alexander Dallin is more or less bound to adopt the third position since otherwise he could not have written a book of 130 pages, counting notes, bibliography and index. Not that *Black Box* is just a bit of bookmaking. It is a sober, thorough and professional analysis of every aspect of the incident by a political science professor from Stanford who is a reputable authority on Soviet affairs. His mills grind exceeding small, in the American manner, but there is no real padding and I learnt a lot from his little book.

His method is as follows. He examines how the incident was first reported and the changing assertions (themselves most instructive) of the Soviet and US governments. Next he discusses how KAL 007 got into Soviet airspace. This is really the core of the mystery, and Dallin shows plausibly and in detail how improbable a navigational error on this scale was, given the equipment and procedures of an aircraft of such size.

Dallin then goes on to tackle the possibility that the divergence from the flight-path was deliberate, either to save time and fuel or because the senior crew members had been suborned by US (or other) intelligence agencies. He shows that the fuel-saving explanation is improbable in the extreme, given the risk involved. On the "intelligence mission" explanation he commits his one error of tact: he regards the International Civil Aviation Organization report on the crash, which dismissed this hypothesis, as a "whitewash". This is unfair for the ICAO report had to deal with evidence and there was no evidence for this theory other than the Soviet allegation. The only circumstantial detail which the Soviet authorities produced — a forty-minute delay in the jet's departure from Anchorage, which the Russians said took place to enable the flight to

coincide with "certain satellite orbital positions or passages" — was investigated by the ICAO and proved to be innocent.

The most valuable part of Dallin's book is his convincing demonstration that the Soviet air defence authorities — contrary to what the US government originally alleged — did not at the time know that KAL 007 was a civilian airliner. By an unfortunate coincidence they had been tracking a genuine US surveillance aircraft, a Boeing RC-135, which was flying close to their airspace. When they picked up KAL 007 on their radar, they seem to have thought that two RC-135s were in the area, and the visual sighting by the interceptor pilot after the Soviet fighters were scrambled did not correct the error: Dallin shows that mistakes in distance-judging could make the size and silhouettes of the RC-135 and 747 seem almost identical. The US government seems, rather reluctantly, to have come round to this explanation too. The inference is that, had the Soviet authorities known that the intruder was a civil airliner with passengers aboard, they would not have shot it down. But this is by no means certain. What does seem clear is that Soviet air defences in this area are, at any rate were in 1983, slow and inefficient.

Dallin's book can be criticized on some heads. He devotes inadequate space to attempts by the KGB's disinformation service to peddle conspiracy theories among the Western media and academia, which netted it some prize boobies. And I think he should have begun his quest by analysing earlier and similar incidents. Not until page 78 does he come to the two most pertinent cases. In 1973 an Israeli Phantom shot down a Libyan Airlines 727 over the Sinai Desert, killing 108 of its 116 passengers. Like KAL 007, it had refused to acknowledge signals or follow instructions to land, and for a time the Israelis loudly maintained it was

on a hostile mission. In fact the pilot had overshoot Cairo and was already returning — he thought the Israeli interceptors were friendly Egyptian escorts. The Israelis eventually admitted their mistake and offered regrets and compensation.

Still more instructive was the case of the KAL 707 in April 1978, on a flight from Paris to Seoul, which went a thousand miles out of its way and appeared to be flying straight to Murmansk. After two hours, Soviet fighters found it and used their cannon, damaging its wing. The pilot, with impressive skill, brought the damaged plane down on a frozen lake. So we know exactly what happened in this case, and the Russians tacitly admitted that the intrusion was accidental, contenting themselves with publicly expelling the pilot and co-pilot.

These two earlier cases suggest, beyond much doubt, that the obvious explanation for KAL 007's route — navigational error — is the correct one, despite Dallin's demonstration of its improbability. How could the Libyan Airlines pilot, an experienced Frenchman, overshoot an enormous, unmistakable city like Cairo? How could a Korean pilot, skilful enough to land a damaged airliner on an unknown frozen lake, make what was described as "the worst navigational error in modern aviation history"? We know that they could, because they did.

Even the best pilots can, and very occasionally do, make extraordinary slips. After reading Dallin's book I am satisfied that the KAL flight-deck crew were guilty of a compounded error, and paid for it with their lives. A great deal was learnt from this episode, however, not least (I imagine) by the Russians, for whom it was a public relations disaster. It is extremely improbable that anything like it could occur again. But who knows? Pilots will remain fallible and Russians trigger-happy.

Linkage and leverage

Gerald Frost

ROGER B. PORTER

The U.S.-U.S.S.R. Grain Agreement
160pp. Cambridge University Press. £17.50.
0521 236762

Almost ten years ago, in accordance with the ruling spirit of détente, the United States announced a massive new grain export agreement with the Russians worth \$1 billion a year to American farmers. In negotiating the deal the Americans were partly motivated by a desire to avoid a humiliating repudiation of what the late Senator "Scoop" Jackson described as "one of the most notorious foul-ups in American history" — the exploitation of an agreement reached three years earlier, which had allowed Soviet purchasing agents to launch a dramatic "raid" on the grain markets by means of a series of simultaneous secret deals reached before the markets could adjust to the sudden onslaught of demand. This had depleted US grain reserves almost overnight, sent prices rocketing, disrupted the markets generally, raised both food prices and the retail price index, and cost the American taxpayer more than \$370 million in shipping and export subsidies.

Apart from wishing to avoid a further "raid" on the markets, the US government believed that the 1975 agreement would enable it to obtain important political and economic leverage in its dealings with the Soviet Union. In this respect the deal perfectly embodied the wish-fulfilment and false analyses of Soviet intentions which, in retrospect, can be seen to have characterized détente.

Both President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger believed that the deal would help "China and the Soviet Union". And Rebecca V. Strobe in her essay "Strategic Issues and Soviet Foreign Policy" concludes that "the coincidence of mounting economic difficulties, growing political challenges, and changes in leadership may provide the incentive and the opportunity for a significant departure from the strategic policies of the Brezhnev-Andropov era".

them reach an agreement to import oil from the Soviet Union at bargain prices. Ford, along with most members of the State Department, appeared to accept Kissinger's assessment that the grain crop was a "tremendous asset", and that if sales to the Russians were handled prudently, they could also buy "a year or two of good Soviet behaviour".

In this detailed description of the background to the deal and of the governmental machinery brought into operation to bring it about, Roger B. Porter records that Kissinger had been much impressed by the way in which the OPEC members had used their oil resources to obtain political advantage. Accordingly, he believed that the prospect of the grain agreement might encourage the Soviet Union to exercise a "calming" influence in the Middle East. In any event, it is clear from Porter's first-hand account that Kissinger had little difficulty in convincing the members of the US Economic Planning Board (of which Porter was a member) and other colleagues in government that there could be a "crucial link" between agriculture and foreign policy. As a result, "linkage" and "leverage" became fashionable concepts in the formulation of US foreign policy. However, the supposedly crucial link between grain and foreign policy remained solely in the realm of Kissinger's political scenarios and stubbornly refused to come to life as a factor influencing Soviet behaviour.

The grain deal did, however, prevent a second "Great Grain Robbery" and succeeded in introducing a degree of much-needed stability and predictability in the US grain market. But it did not lead to the lucrative oil deal which Ford and Kissinger hoped for; it did not persuade the Soviet Union to exercise a "calming influence" in the Middle East; and little

evidence has come to light of Soviet good behaviour — witness the invasion of Afghanistan. Indeed one gets the impression from Porter's account that no one in the US government knew precisely what benefits the grain deal was intended to help achieve or how it was expected to do so, and if Kissinger occasionally had insights into such matters he did not deign to pass on this knowledge to colleagues.

If negotiating the grain deal failed to contribute to the attainment of any identifiable political objectives, Carter's decision to scrap it following the invasion of Afghanistan was scarcely more productive. Then under growing criticism for failing to provide determined leadership, Carter acted on the novel and somewhat masochistic principle that although the decision to cancel the agreement would damage the United States more than the Soviet Union (which found alternative sources of supply) it would impress the Soviet Government by signalling the extent of the President's injured feelings.

In his concluding comments, Porter seems pessimistic about the possibility of ever influencing the Soviet Union by economic factors since for reasons of pride it is bound to resist all attempts at leverage. Actually, it resists such attempts because its leaders have a clear perception that it is in their interests to do so; the concept of "face" which weighs so heavily with the Chinese is not a major factor with the Russians.

Whether or not economic factors can play a part in influencing Soviet behaviour is not answered by this book, which is excessively concerned with the minor details relating to the machinery of government. However, told the story of the 1975 grain deal is not likely to provide an answer. A grain deal which was entered into for insufficiently defined purposes, inconsistently pursued and then scrapped in haste without proper regard to the consequences, is an inadequate basis for reaching a conclusion about such an important matter.

STONES OF THE WALL

Dai Houying
Translated by Frances Wood

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MICHAEL JOSEPH

Spirit death

Mark Abley

ANASTASIA M. SHKILNYK
A Poison Stronger than Love: The destruction of an Ojibwa community
275pp. Yale University Press. £30 (paperback, £9.95).
0 300 029977

The road to hell was paved with good intentions. Administrators looked on Grassy Narrows, an isolated Ojibwa reserve in north-western Ontario, and saw a community without regular access to modern medicine. They saw a backward people whose children were sent away to distant boarding-schools. They saw that Grassy Narrows sprawled over the islands and peninsulas by an inconvenient river, without even a gravel road that could take the residents to and from the town of Kenora. The administrators had declared a war on the poverty of Canada's Indians. They promised the people of Grassy Narrows more jobs, and more government aid, and electricity, and cheaper food; they also threatened them with the withdrawal of their family allowances. Modernization was for their own good. All they had to do was leave their old reserve for ever, and move five miles to a new townsite beside a logging road.

In 1963 the people began to move, and by 1972 nobody was living on those islands and peninsulas. Yet in the new Grassy Narrows, a strange and terrible thing happened: the community fell apart. The words are simple and bland; the reality is complex and horrifying. In 1977 Grassy Narrows had a population of 490, living in sixty-five frame houses, and in the first ten months of the year the police were called to investigate 698 disturbances, threats or criminal acts. Forty-six per cent of children failed to complete the school year; nearly a third of all children between eight and fifteen were on probation for criminal behaviour. Two years later the reserve had twenty-four children enrolled in Grade Two (usually a class for seven year-olds); ten of them were already showing signs of mental deterioration as a result of sniffing gasoline. Vandalism has become abundant; gang-rapes common; incest no longer rare; and alcoholism merely normal. More than four-fifths of men over the age of thirty, and about two-thirds of the women, went on prolonged and regular alcoholic sprees. In a single twelve-month period, twenty-six people between the ages of eleven and nineteen tried to commit suicide.

The statistics could go on and on. Suffice it to say that Andrew Mikita, a clinical psychologist who visited the reserve, compared the plight of its inhabitants – especially its women – to the condition of patients suffering from brain damage. Anastasia Shkilnyk, a community planner with experience of "under-developed" countries that paled by comparison with Grassy

Narrows, lived on the reserve for nearly three years; and her disturbing, powerful book begins with a description of the almost unbelievable desperation of life there. But the importance of *A Poison Stronger Than Love* lies in its lucid explanation of why the community degenerated so fast, reaching a state of social collapse in which the impulse to care and the will to live had ceased to be the norm.

If the new reserve was hell, the old reserve had not been paradise. Yet it had functioned as a community in which children and old people alike knew their responsibilities and duties, and in which the rituals of Ojibwa life (including the "vision-quest" for adolescent boys) were still observed. The people chose their leader according to his spiritual powers and his hunting skills – the concepts were, of course, linked – and according to traditional patterns of kinship, which retained their ancient importance. Trapping, fishing, hunting and gardening were more valuable sources of food than was wage-labour. "Life on the old reserve was primitive", Shkilnyk writes, "but families showed a remarkable degree of competence in assuring the survival and well-being of their members." Her book goes on to throw an inquisitive shadow over such loaded terms as "primitive".

When the people moved to the new site, their entire way of life changed. The present reserve is, essentially, a cluster of houses which the government erected beside a stagnant lake; the ties of clan and family can no longer determine the arrangement of homes. The site is too rocky, and the space too limited, for the effective maintenance of vegetable gardens. A school exists on the reserve, and attendance is (in theory) compulsory; in consequence, families no longer spend the winter months working trap-lines together in the bush. Until the 1960s the people's diet was still based on game, fish, berries and other traditional – or "primitive" – fare; nowadays most of their food comes from a supermarket in Kenora, and comprises tinned goods, soft drinks and white bread. As for Ojibwa spiritual life, all its rituals have been abandoned except for the ceremonies that mark death. Though Shkilnyk says little about the subject, it also seems clear that use of the Ojibwa language has declined greatly; today a chief is selected according to his ability to speak fluent English and to deal with the government. Finally, the widespread misuse of alcohol has imposed its own pattern on community life (the book's title alludes to the description of alcohol) by a Grassy Narrows resident, as a poison and "a stronger power than the love of children". In 1977 alone, the people spent \$201,000 on liquor.

In short, Grassy Narrows has lost the quality of hope. Its residents speak of their new home as a corral, a cage, a concentration-camp. Yet without any belief in the future, or in themselves as a community, they seem powerless to act in a cohesive manner. Their story differs in

its misery and intensity from that of other Indian bands in northern Canada, but they are by no means the only people to be wrenched from a traditional way of life and dumped uncompromisingly into the modern world.

In 1956, for example, the government of Canada decided that a group of Chipewyan Indians in northern Manitoba could function no longer as a self-sufficient community in the wilderness (to the Indians, of course, it was not a wilderness), and it sent aeroplanes to relocate them to a settlement of shacks and tents near Churchill, on the shore of Hudson Bay. A group of Cree Indians, traditional enemies of the Chipewyan, were already living there when the Chipewyans, most of whom spoke no English, arrived in a town which many of them had never even seen. Eventually the government moved them to "Camp Ten", a group of forty-five small houses on an exposed ridge beside the local graveyard. The result was a predictable agony of suicide, prostitution, crime and rampant alcoholism. The main difference between this tale and the story of Grassy Narrows is that in 1973, most of the Chipewyans at Churchill moved back into the distant forest, where they remain. The had preserved enough self-respect to affect their own fate.

The forced relocation of Grassy Narrows was not the final blow to its people's culture and self-esteem. In 1970 Canadians learned with shock and anger that Dryden Chemicals Ltd (a subsidiary of a British multi-national) had poured more than 20,000 lbs of mercury into the English-Wabigoon river system in the previous eight years. Because mercury is such a long-lasting element, some 300 miles of waterways have been irreparably poisoned until well into the next century. As a result, commercial fishing ceased for the people on several reserves in north-western Ontario – including Grassy Narrows. The immediate decline in tourism and sport-fishing caused further unemployment. The extent of mercury poisoning among the Ojibwa remains unclear, as its symptoms often resemble those of prolonged alcoholism; but the people's trust in the river, formerly central to their spiritual and economic life, has been broken. The government promised reparations. So far it has delivered nothing.

A Poison Stronger Than Love chronicles these events with such calm rage that I was reminded of Colin Turnbull's well-known book *The Mountain People*, a study of the breakdown of values among the Ik tribe in east Africa. In each case a well-meaning government forced a hunting people to change its home, its economy and its culture. In each case the result was appalling. The people of Grassy Narrows were by no means ignorant that a disaster had befallen them; addressing a provincial Royal Commission in 1978, the chief of the reserve spoke of "the total physical, mental, and spiritual breakdown of our people". But like the Ik, these Ojibwa have difficulty imagining a return to health. In one crucial respect, however, Turnbull's findings differ from those of Shkilnyk. In *The Mountain People* Turnbull suggests that "the Ik... do not value emotion above survival, and they are without love". Shkilnyk, by contrast, describes a people who still feel love, though they have lost the ability to show it; and at Grassy Narrows, survival may no longer be valued very highly.

Perhaps the most frightening possibility of all is that Grassy Narrows is not so much a distressing aberration from the typical pattern of Indian-white relations in Canada as an emblem of them. While Shkilnyk emphasizes the uniqueness of these particular circumstances, she also admits that "All these changes in the political and social order of the Grassy Narrows community are the products of a public policy whose main thrust has always been, and continues to be, the assimilation of Indian people." She quotes statistics which indicate that the rate of suicide among Canada's Indians may be as high as twelve times the national average; nobody knows for sure. About a third of all Indians in the country meet a violent death. Even those whites who seem free of overt prejudice against native people often display a terrible arrogance towards them. A few years ago, for example, the Ontario Minister of Resources Development described Indians as "the children of the federal government". He meant simply to emphasize that his government was not responsible for native people; but his words suggest that he, like so many others, believes Indians to be immature and incapable of rational decision.

One is tempted to say that the most hopeful lines of *A Poison Stronger Than Love* lie not in its pages but on its dust-jacket: "Anastasia M. Shkilnyk is now a policy adviser on aboriginal affairs to the Assistant Under-Secretary of State, Ottawa." But such a statement would be, in its way, no less paternalistic than the cabinet minister's description of Indians as children. The native peoples of Canada, like aboriginals around the world, are in desperate need of integration – integration, that is, of their own spiritual world with the physical world about them, which continues to alter with such relentless speed. Whether from guilt, fear or misguided altruism, the Canadian government has poured large sums of money into many Indian reserves, including Grassy Narrows. What Canadians have never allowed their native people is respect, self-sufficiency, and the time to "develop" as and how they wish. If there is hope in this bleak story, it must be the hope that even those Indian communities which have been most fractured by the modern world can somehow begin to take command of their own lives and their own lands. "A slave", Shkilnyk observes, "is also a man who waits for someone else to come and free him."

And the challenge of a colder climate than they had been used to, and also the opportunity of abundant land and unexploited forests and fisheries. They lost the Islanders' art of ocean navigation, because splits and splinters in their tribes could be accommodated without further migration. They gained sophistication in war and diplomacy, and consequently in rhetoric, as the system of tribes and territories emerged, and learned to construct elaborately decorated permanent buildings.

The oceanic origins were acknowledged in the mythology and in poetic imagery; much of that quoted here is of separation and loss. While the sea was fundamentally hostile (and fish equated with enemies) the land was friendly; trees and mountains were venerated; and even the stones were calcified relics of ancestors and epic deeds.

The effect of this explanation is to remove the sense of evil that has become associated in our literary imagination with shamanism and savage ritual. *Coral Island* was published three years after Grey's *Polynesian Mythology*. Maori ritual becomes a benign paganism; remnants of the pagan survivals in English local traditions.

There is an implication, largely through

what is not stated in the book, that the Europeans are responsible for the modern environmental crisis, if only because they have, in places like New Zealand, become detached from their own traditional roots. But all was not well in the pre-European garden of Eden. The mon, a large flightless bird that was essential to the economy of the early Maoris, was hunted to extinction by 1500 and the social organization of the later phase of the Maori period of New Zealand history was marked by tribal enmity and the construction of hilltop fortresses or *pas*. The impression is given in these pages of a static society for several centuries before the arrival of the Europeans.

One cannot disagree with the plea for greater reverence toward the natural world, and however contentious the argument of the text might be, it has led to the production of a most interesting and attractive book.

In *Peasants, Subsistence Ecology, and Development in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea* (302pp. Princeton University Press, £37.70, 0 691 09406 3) Lawrence S. Grossman analyses the effects of peasant involvement in cattle raising and coffee production in the 1970s.

Insiders and nonconformists

Stefan Collini

E. W. SWANTON
Gubby Allen: Man of cricket
311pp. Hutchinson. £12.95.
0 09 159780 3
BASIL HAYNES and JOHN LUCAS
The Trent Bridge Battery: The story of the sporting Gunns
208pp. Collins. £12.
0 00218175 4
DAVID FOOT
Cricket's Unholy Trinity
188pp. Hutchinson. £8.95.
0 09 159830 3

Although cricket, more than any other sport, has been accompanied by a long tradition of good writing, it has to be said that complacency and sentimentalism are recurring features of this literature. In cricket books everyone is clapped to the wicket, given an easy phrase to get off the mark and allowed to tell old jokes; the atmosphere of mandatory good fellowship can eventually become oppressive. The fact that cricket is the game which has most fully expressed and been implicated in the historical intricacies of English class and status relations is rarely allowed to intrude on this mellow scene. In so far as cricket books do consider what happens on the other side of the pavilion gate, they tend to resemble the derided social history of the Trevelyan era, describing a world where cheerful professionals labour long for little, and where women only appear as providers of tea and children. There are, of course, exceptions to this general tendency, from C. L. R. James's *Beyond a Boundary* down, but it remains true that to introduce serious critical or sociological reflections can seem like a cross misjudgment of the occasion, like picking a match on the village green.

It is a virtue of these three books that they do not altogether ignore the social relations of cricket, though they address themselves to the subject with rather different degrees of self-consciousness. As usual, those who have had good reason to find present arrangements satisfactory generally have least interest in consciousness-raising, and E. W. Swanton, for twenty-nine years the cricket correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, could anyway hardly be described as one of nature's boat-rockers. Swanton's style is certainly of a later, less lyrical vintage than that of the "crimson orb sped on its grassy journey" variety, but his portly, unburied prose does seem well suited to the social assumptions of the County Member of the day before yesterday. Narrating the never-to-be-forgotten deeds of the 1920 Winchester v Eton match (G. O. Allen 9 for 34), Swanton tells us – authoritatively, perhaps a shade confidently, certainly not defensively or apologetically – that "the ball generally moves in the air at Winchester". Similarly, Allen is reported winning the South of France Handicap in golf, "beating a Jap in the final"; the Duke of Edinburgh is praised for his part in a match in which he scored "twelve well-made runs" (well connected, Sir); a pace bowler is described, in that coy idiom that cricket writers used to be fond of, as "disagreeably hasty"; and – a particularly nice Trevelyanism this – an account is given of a tour to South Africa "in those happy days of Union under the Crown when all races lived in peace". Swanton, one might say, is the Lord Blake of cricket historians (Lord Home contributes a few well-made sentences as a foreword to the present volume); judicious, knowledgeable, loyal to the game, more likely to be accused of blandness than of acerbity, with that well-turned blind eye so necessary for the chronicler of the Tory Party at play.

Allen was, of course, born with a silver bat in his mouth (a nice misprint in the publisher's handout refers to his interests outside cricket as "stockbroking and gold" – at least, I assume it's a misprint); Eton, Cambridge and Middlesex protégé of Plum Warner, MCC committee member at thirty-two, England captain; society balls, royal invitations, a few well-made pounds in the City; a good war as a Colonel in the Intelligence, dining with the Duchess of Devonshire when Pearl Harbor was bombed, lunching tête-à-tête with "Alex" (Field Marshal Lord Alexander, a pre-war friend) before Monte Cassino; all the major posts and honours in cricket culminated in a 1960 Room

dinner to celebrate his eightieth birthday, the toast proposed by the man who missed a slip catch off Allen in that match against Winchester but who none the less managed to become Prime Minister forty-three years later. There is a studied lack of edge, or even distance, in Swanton's remark of his never married subject that "Gubby would say with Lord Houghton that 'The intimate conversation of important men is the cream of life'".

Naturally enough, it is Allen's playing career that receives the greater part of Swanton's attention in this thorough and substantial biography, not that being a player (or, rather, a Gentleman) was then as demanding an activity as it is now. Having been sent down from Trinity after two years without a degree ("He in no way resented this, for he had done no work"), Allen began work in the City, and his business commitments never thereafter allowed him to play a full summer's cricket. Indeed, he was selected for the 1932 tour of Australia after having played only four first-class matches that season. Drawing upon his letters home from that tour, the book throws a very small pool of fresh light on the endlessly discussed "Bodyline" controversy, documenting Allen's refusal to bowl in the required way. Although his cricketer achievements did not issue in quite the impressive statistics one associates with players of his reputation, this book provides more than enough detail to establish Allen's status as a genuine all-rounder, including the fact that he scored his last first-class hundred, against his old university, at the age of fifty-one. Swanton also provides an interesting account of Allen's subsequent role as the Lord High Everything Else of English cricket. As a selector, his principle, we are told, perhaps unnecessarily, was "when in doubt, go for class" (not that doubt ever seems to have been a companion he cultivated with any intimacy), a principle upon which the gods looked kindly in 1956 when in successive tests he recalled Washbrook, Sheppard and Compton. Swanton also gives a characteristically calm and careful account of Allen's part in the "d'Oliveira affair" of 1968. In its apparent insensitivity, if only by omission, to the feelings which stirred the large number of protesters against d'Oliveira's non-selection for the tour of South Africa, this account provides a telling example of the limitations of "insider" history. For although Swanton reveals close familiarity with the parts played by Cabinet ministers and MCC officials, this is a subject to which the intimate conversation of important men can only provide a – in both senses of the word – partial guide. This is one of the moments in the book when one would welcome a little of Arlott's emotionalism and indignation.

Basil Haynes and John Lucas, the one a lecturer in Agriculture and the other a well-known left-wing Professor of English, are, as one might expect, more explicitly concerned with cricket's material base. They intend their exceptionally well-illustrated book to be a piece of social history, and in addition to the usual rehearsal of great deeds on the field we are also treated to, for example, a sympathetic assessment, in a tone far removed from Swantonian mellifluence, of inept trade unionism among late nineteenth-century professionals, set in a context of low wages and agricultural depression. The central characters of *The Trent Bridge Battery* are William Gunn, son of a Nottingham publican, and John and George, sons of William's greengrocer brother, with a minor part for George's son, George Vernon Gunn. Their careers spanned the years 1880-1939, years when, as the authors remind us, players matured later and lasted longer: John Gunn took over fifty wickets and scored over 1,000 runs when he was forty-five, while his brother celebrated his fiftieth birthday by scoring 164 not out, part of a season in which he played in every match for his county. But the Gunn family illustrate another side of the economic history of cricket, since they not only made runs, they made bats as well, William having shrewdly cashed in on the business of supplying the late nineteenth-century boom in sport. Gunn and Moore bats made William a wealthy man, but – it is an episode that wants its Galsworthy – he left his cricketing nephews nothing but a couple of tie-pins.

Haynes and Lucas have written a book



Spectators at the Parks, Oxford, sheltering during a snow shower in May 1967: the picture is taken from Double Century: 200 years of cricket in "The Times", edited by Marcus Williams (621pp. Collins. £17.50. 0002181320).

which engagingly mixes the detail of local history with the evocation of stirring deeds by the mustachioed worthies who stare out from the period prints: quotations from *Wisden* are outnumbered by those from the likes of the *Nottingham Journal* or the *Egham and Staines News*. This mixture is nicely caught in the story of the 1897 match against Yorkshire in which John Gunn first distinguished himself as a bowler: at the fall of each Yorkshire wicket, a Notts supporter would release a pigeon to carry the good news back to Nottingham. The personalities of the three leading figures are perhaps left a bit under-explored. William, who became the stern, rigidly punctual "Guv'nor" at Gunn and Moore, remains particularly opaque, and one wonders if anything more should be made of the temperamental contrast between the younger pair: John, solidly, almost dourly, dependable when in the middle, enjoyed a noisy, untidy family house, while George, who led a notably orderly, regulated home life, was all whimsical invention and irrepressible individuality at the wicket. This book is a good example of the social history of cricket; the stage of its psycho-history is presumably still to come.

The theme of David Foot's *Cricket's Unholy Trinity* is a psychologically more promising one: it consists of studies of three cricketers who combined considerable talent with a cantankerous, nonconformist, self-destructive streak which denied them their proper place in English cricket. The most arresting of these three portraits is that of Charlie Parker, the left-arm spinner who took over 3,000 wickets for Gloucestershire between 1903 and 1935, yet who only played one game for England. The "Lord's Establishment" in general, and Plum Warner in particular, come in for their usual share of suspicion and hostility here, sentiments memorably enacted by Parker, who practically assaulted the frail Warner in a West Country hotel. More generally, Parker clearly derived some elemental satisfactions from his provocative, adversarial relations with "the nob", and while Foot does not really plumb the depths of *ressentiment* as a deliberately cultivated form of self-expression, his punchy, journalistic style conveys a vivid impression of the man. The longevity of cricket careers in this period is again remarked, with Parker taking over 100 first-class wickets a season in his early fifties. Among many differences between then and now was the fact that much less was expected by way of athleticism in the field in those more easygoing days, though Parker could, characteristically, grumble about even these modest demands: "I'm a bowler not a bleedin' fielder" was how he fended off any threatened reproach, displaying his usual strong sense of his own worth.

Cecil Parkin of Lancashire, Foot's second subject, was a less colourful figure, and since he played in ten test matches in his comparatively short county career (1914-26) he is less a study in exclusion (and correspondingly less neglected by the game's historians). In this respect, Foot's most original contribution comes with his third subject, Jack MacBryan, of Somerset, the only amateur in his trio. The source material here is richer because much of the study derives from interviews conducted with MacBryan towards the end of his long life (he died in 1983 at the age of ninety-one). In

some ways he seemed to be the classic amateur of the period – a stylish, well-coached batsman, a county player at rugby, golf and hockey (at which he also represented England in the 1920 Olympics), a dabbling stockbroker, a fancier of pretty women. But the reality of MacBryan's life never quite matched this stereotype: he failed at stockbroking, he contracted a disastrous marriage to a "Gaiety girl", he fell out with committee members and usually preferred the company of professionals to that of other amateurs. Despite frequently topping the Somerset averages between 1911 and 1931, he was only once chosen to play for England, when – it is a tribute to Foot's essay that one comes to find this typical – he did not bat because of rain. MacBryan's genial but far from bland reminiscences, as tactfully deployed by Foot, touch on many aspects of the social scene of the first half of the century, and in this respect the book as a whole persuasively reaffirms the wisdom behind C. L. R. James's famous rhetorical question: "What do they know of cricket who only cricket know?"

Eastern Light

for Jonathan Crossley-Holland

There was a time when so little seemed uncertain. I lounged beneath the green seigneurs and viewed the huge sky stooping: rinsed, I wrote, and rhyming, and fluent, and lapidary.

The light was a bright statement, candid and clean as a Commandment, a sword-stroke admitting no half-measure. Doubt itself seemed a sin.

In this indeterminate and empty quarter, this mesh of sanding and marsh and creek, I see this is creation light; unblinking light, severe and immense. Does that mean it is true?

That boy climbing the dune's escarpment, scrambling to the top of far Gun Hill comes so close we could call out to him.

In this frame almost innocent of dampness and bruises and concealment, the tricks-in-trade of the misty west, is there one blade, one fault, one silver serpent, you think you cannot clearly see?

You see what you think then? Where is the deceit in equity? Look east. Light of light. I go back to the beginning. Apparent, I write.

KEVIN CROSSLEY-HOLLAND

Benign balance

Gregory Palmer

MARGARET ORBELL
The Natural World of the Maori
230pp. David Bateman. £20.
0 90661030 0

The myths and lore of the New Zealand Maoris were extensively collected and published by the Victorians. The most notable of these collectors was Sir George Grey, who was sent to New Zealand, at the age of thirty-two, during a turbulent period in its history. He published a collection of myths, printed in Maori, in London in 1854, and in English the following year. A missionary, Richard Taylor, also published a collection in 1855. Romanticized stories drawn from the myths were popularized by James Cowan early in the twentieth century, when Sir Peter Buck also brought a scientific perspective to bear.

An English version of Maori mythology has thus become a tradition in its own right: from Victorian curiosity through romantic patriotism to anthropology and psychoanalysis. *The Natural World of the Maori* is part of that tradition, reflecting, as did its predecessors, con-

temporary concerns; in this case man and the environment.

The contention of the book is that the Maoris, living of necessity close to nature, developed a concept of natural balance, *ikanga*, which is reminiscent of the "great chain of being". This consequently required reverence for natural objects which could then only be exploited: killed, cut down or quarried; after the performance of the right rituals. Margaret Orbell, who is described as an anthropologist and literary scholar, has drawn on myths, proverbs, custom and poetry, quoted in Maori and English, to portray the natural world through Maori eyes.

The pictures – Geoff Moon is the photographer – mainly portray that natural world objectively, the indigenous flowers, trees and birds, and those mountains, lakes and beaches that have remained unspoiled. They are therefore not strictly part of the argument, except that they make the book accessible to those who cannot see these things out of their windows, and they make the case, from another direction, that the wild world is worth preserving, *ikanga* or no *ikanga*.

The New Zealand environment offered to the Polynesian immigrants of the ninth century

Loyalty to the group

Charles Townshend

RICHARD HOLMES
Firing Line
436pp. Cape. £12.95.
0 224 02043 9

Why do people fight – not in spontaneous anger but in the painfully contrived organizations called armies, whose nature shapes the armed clashes called battles? How can battles occur? These are questions which until recently did not preoccupy military historians. As John Keegan showed in *The Face of Battle*, the traditional "battle piece" created by Julius Caesar dealt in greatly simplified mass actions in which soldiers figured as near-automata, cleaving to their eagles or flags and rallying to their commanders. In the modern variant they are impelled by patriotism or other ideological stimuli. Since Keegan's pioneering work, the radical writings of Ardan du Picq and the startlingly initialled S. L. A. Marshall have gained wider currency in Britain. It is fairly common knowledge that the dynamics of action under high-velocity gunfire stem from the cohesion of small intimate groups and not from the directions of generals.

All the same, the question of why people fight remains more difficult to answer than the question of how they fight. The two are of course inseparable, in that much of the answer lies in the mechanics of getting people on to the battlefield, after which fighting is more or less guaranteed by the survival instinct. Keegan's work used this du Picq paradox to great effect, and Richard Holmes now goes a stage further. Where Keegan set out to render the "battle piece" more credible, Holmes sidesteps the limiting category of "battle" to deal with com-

bat in general. He thus avoids the inconsistencies that Keegan ran into when he tried to distinguish battle from sporadic fighting (of the sort increasingly familiar in counter-insurgency operations), while yet maintaining that the great unities of time, space and action were illusory to the ordinary combatant, whose real battle was a tiny, local affair – one might almost say a guerrilla action.

What Dr Holmes sets out to do is, in effect, to extend Clausewitz's vivid image of the recruit's march into battle. Thus we follow the progress of soldiers through oath-taking, clothing, training, setting out on campaign, to combat, wounding and death, coping with fear, responding to leadership, and reacting to the enemy. The soldiers come from all over Europe and America in the last three centuries, but principally from the British army of the last generation. Here the author's wide reading is amplified by a survey sample of hundreds of living soldiers, including members of the Falklands task force.

Despite making effective use of statistical material, and a less casual use of psychological theory than Keegan, Holmes's method is essentially eclectic and impressionistic. Thus, for instance, on the phenomenon of "fraggings" (the murder of unpopular officers and NCOs by their own troops), the material on Vietnam is a complete set of statistics, while for the First World War it is three random examples. Some readers may find this imbalance unsatisfactory, but overall Holmes's technique of selection is absolutely convincing. His relaxed, deceptively plain style is the perfect vehicle for his material, and his sane attitude controls even the most grisly incidents. This is a compelling and instructive book.

It is astonishing what people caught up, voluntarily or involuntarily, in military orga-

nizations will put up with: not only the destruction of battle, but also the routine of exploitation of combat soldiers through the incompetence or indifference or malice of the establishment. At the political level this takes the form of the monstrous ingratitude of most societies to those who fight for them. At the organizational level, which Holmes bravely confronts, it is corruption, the sheer range and scale of which (neither Milo Minderbinder nor Ernie Bilko figure in the book, but they represent an awful reality for armies), and the suffering needlessly inflicted on one's own people, seem to call for some real effort at control. But military authorities appear to write it off as one of the countless grit particles that cause friction in the military machine, and are not prepared to expend the energy needed to discipline the "rear echelon". They are concerned with finite objectives, not with building a better world, even though it is hard to see how a bent army can represent a straight society.

That effectiveness is a function of capacity and motivation. The first can be measured whereas the second cannot. If there is any

weakness in Holmes's analysis, it lies here. Just as Keegan's explorations of the "will to combat" were the least satisfactory sections of *The Face of Battle*, so Holmes is at his least convincing in the "will to warfare". Part of the trouble lies in the monolithic impression both writers appear to have of the nature of soldiers – seemingly immutable over the centuries – a readiness to acknowledge the impact of technological change but not of social change. For all the resilience of military traditionalism, modern societies are different. The deference of Wellington's rankers has gone for good. Total war has changed the significance of battle: what is decisive is no longer the battlefield but the wider mobilization of society. Battle as a kind of hermetic arbitration had disappeared long before the First World War. In this respect Keegan did not take his argument far enough, and Holmes's rather offhand refutation of it is too imprecise. The form of combat must be determined by the nature of armies, which in the end reflect the nature of the societies from which they are drawn. In the end, albeit indirectly, the people win.

Doing the right thing

Keith Jeffery

MAX ARTHUR
Above All, Courage: The Falklands front line: First-hand accounts
338pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £12.95.
0 283 99242 2
WALTER WINWARD
Rainbow Soldiers
341pp. Hamish Hamilton. £8.95.
0 241 11542 6

Although British soldiers have certainly seen plenty of action since the Second World War, not much of this has been what one might call "proper" soldiering. Armies, after all, are principally organized to fight other armies. Apart from the Falklands war, however, the British have only fought set-piece "battles" against unformed, professional opponents on two occasions: in Korea and at Suez. Neither conflict has generated very much British war literature. In the case of the former the British had only a comparatively minor role, and in any case the Americans were running the show. In the latter, brevity and the inconclusive and unsatisfactory end to the operation left little for the military writer to celebrate. But the Falklands war was quite different and over the past three years it has prompted what seems to be a greater volume of publications than any other British conflict since 1945. This is not particularly surprising since the conflict was clear-cut, relatively limited in time and space, and it resulted in an unequivocal victory against the Argentinians. There were, moreover, none of those tedious moral difficulties which attend the peace-keeping operations and anti-nationalist holding exercises which have largely been the lot of the British army over the past forty years. It was, or at least it seemed to be, a nice simple fight between goodies and baddies; a kind of global, if lethal, cops and robbers.

This is very much the attitude adopted by the servicemen in Max Arthur's valuable collection of interviews. They all believed that they were "doing the right thing", and this was a significant factor in maintaining morale. But more important yet was their *esprit de corps* and the strength of their corporate identity. More than one soldier expresses the opinion that he was fighting not for the Falkland Islands, or the Queen, or even for Mrs Thatcher, but really only for himself and his comrades. In tight corners – and there are plenty of these in Mr Arthur's book – you depend on your mates and more often than not upon their automatic reactions to events.

A recurrent feature of the book is the individual soldier's air of surprise that he has done anything particularly brave at all. "It is just a job, and you don't think about the danger at the time." Such an attitude is admirably modest – not to say insouciant – and no doubt generally true. But the sentiment expressed may also reflect the technique

adopted in putting this book together. Is a soldier likely to express himself very differently to an interviewer? The conventional way to behave in these circumstances is to deny that one has been particularly courageous and to affirm that anyone would have one the same in similar circumstances. Is it likely that one of the interviewees would tell Arthur that, yes, he had been especially brave and had gone out to the Falklands with the deliberate intention of performing "over and above the call of duty" in order to earn some sort of medal?

The starting-point for Arthur's book was the list published in the autumn of 1982 of those decorated for service in the Falklands conflict. Drawing mostly from this list, he interviewed over 200 people and eventually selected twenty-nine men and one woman for his volume. The aim was to let the interviewees "speak for themselves". Although the book is ostensibly "by" Max Arthur (and he holds the copyright) the "real" authors are the servicemen and women themselves. The edited interviews are graphic and moving, yet the most immediate section of the book comprises extracts from the diary of a medical officer written on the battlefield itself. This does raise a small question as to the full authenticity of the other accounts. However sensitive the editing, the stories told in *Above All, Courage* by no means constitute raw evidence. It would have helped to know a little more about Arthur's precise interviewing and editing technique. Did he, for example, ask the same questions of each person, and in what ways did he prompt them, if at all? At one stage Admiral Sandy Woodward remarks: "As for the *Belgrano*, enough has been said on that subject to satisfy anyone, I'd have thought." As presented in the book, he appears to have volunteered this observation. Perhaps the Admiral says this to everyone interested in the Falklands (an understandable attitude in these Dailly days), but perhaps Max Arthur himself introduced the subject.

None of the accounts reproduced in *Above All, Courage* is by a private soldier. Indeed, two-thirds of them are by officers – mostly from elite formations such as the Paratroopers, Marines – who are uniformly articulate, thoughtful and just a little gung-ho. Although none of them glosses over the horror, dirt, danger or pain of battle, neither do they regret having participated in the exhilarating, breathless action of what one calls a "great adventure". "Looking back", adds another, "I wouldn't have missed it for the world."

There are gung-ho officers, too, in *Rainbow Soldiers*, and private soldiers, mostly lovable ruffians who are the salt of the earth in battle. As in Max Arthur's book, most of the action takes place on the Falklands, but unlike it Walter Winward's is a work of fiction: War Picture Library without the pictures. In two respects, however, the novel illuminates important aspects of the conflict untouched by *Above All, Courage*. There are inarticulate and terrified soldiers in Mr Winward's book, and part of his story is also told from the Argentine point of view.

Testaments of trade

David Abulafia

STEVEN EPSTEIN
Wills and Wealth in Medieval Genoa, 1150–1250
269pp. Harvard University Press. £20.50.
0 674 95356 8

Venice has achieved a final victory over Genoa by winning to its archives much greater numbers of historians; yet the mass of notarial acts in the Genoese archives is unrivalled in scale and in chronological span. From the twelfth century onwards, notaries in Genoa deposited with the city government their books of acts, roughly recorded in pale ink on friable paper, which were considered to have legal force in themselves, even without the production of fair copies of documents on parchment. The first surviving cartulary dates back to 1154, and, as Steven Epstein suggests, it may in any case have been one of the first to be placed on deposit with the commune. Around 1150, too, we see the formalization of wills, which become structured documents, dictated to notaries in the vernacular and entered in the notarial registers in Latin. And this emphasis on a true record of last intentions is itself a reflection of the rapid commercial expansion of Genoa: patricians and self-made merchants accumulated a vast range of business interests, in trade and banking, but also in urban and rural property. With this expansion grew also the dilemma over the morality of profit-making enterprises that is reflected in the death-bed renun-

ciation of usury and restitution of ill-gotten gains, or at least in a steady stream of charitable donations, to lepers, for the ransoming of captives or the sustenance of the poor.

But Epstein seeks to do more than confirm existing impressions of great economic vitality in twelfth and thirteenth-century Genoa. He aims to reach the mental outlook of the citizens, seeing a will, whether made in final illness or while preparing for a long voyage, as a considered statement of priorities: an opportunity to win divine favour, to reward faithful servants and, not least, to ensure survival of one's own wealth through several generations. He strikingly demonstrates the importance of direct descendants and very close kin as beneficiaries of wills; there has been a tendency to lay greater stress on the extended clan or *albergo* as the focus of loyalty of the most prominent Genoese citizens. Clearly the clan did not lose its protective power in politics and commerce simply because its members preferred to leave their property to their own descendants. Beyond the clan lay a vast *clienela* of middle-class Genoese, of artisans and, often, of peasants too. This is reflected in the wills; Epstein's analysis of the links between Ottone, a judge originally from Milan, and his powerful Doria patrons illustrates the trusting dependence of one middle-class family on the aristocracy.

Epstein's handling of over 600 wills is subtle, imaginative and also thorough. He does not resist the temptation to speculate about the unstated conditions behind a particular legacy. Why did the childless Mabilia, living in the

house of Oberto the furrier, leave twenty *solidi* and a bedspread to the daughter of Adalasia (Oberto's wife)? Epstein suggests that she was perhaps a freed slave, without relatives in Genoa; actually, as in dozens of other cases he analyses, there are many other possible explanations. His discussion of the time of day at which wills were compiled helps bring to life the daily round of an active notary, called upon, perhaps, at dead of night to record the last wishes of a dying man; but the detailed statistical demonstration that certain times of day were more important than others seems over-elaborate, given the conclusions. Equally, in comparing wills he has resisted attempts to allow for inflation over the period 1150 to 1250; and this produces a rather static view of Genoa. How did attitudes to charity or the family change over time? Some trends, such as

the appearance of donations to the friars, are brought out; more comparisons across time would be welcome. One wonders at the book's title: "Wills and Wealth" conveys an impression that more will be said about the formation of family wealth over time.

Epstein occasionally narrows his field of vision so much that wider problems cannot be seen. He has not sought (as his short bibliography reveals) to relate much that he observes to existing work on the Genoese family, the formation of the merchant class, and so on. But the narrow focus does enable him to pick out with remarkable acuteness the concerns of hundreds of Genoese of great or middling wealth. "The persons considered in this study emerge as distinct characters", he claims, and the fact that they do so is a great tribute to the author's skill.

Offences to the family

O. M. T. Logan

GUIDO RUGGIERO
The Boundaries of Eros: Sex crime and sexuality in Renaissance Venice
223pp. Oxford University Press. £25.
0 19 503465 1

The immediate objects of this serious yet witty study are the definition and prosecution of sexual deviancy in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Venice; actual sexual mores can only be glimpsed fleetingly and fragmentarily through the lattice. In the field of sexual culture a study like this of the prosecuting mentality is most welcome. Guido Ruggiero describes the social concerns and the strange fears that animated Venetian statesmen and men of law. We are also shown certain attitudes towards gender and sexuality which were in all likelihood embedded in the culture: eg, only slowly were women perceived to be responsible agents in sexual acts; in time the term "love" entered the legal vocabulary but was understood only as an irrational passion that diminished a man's (*sic*) responsibility for his actions. Professor Ruggiero's constant concern is to interpret the judicial records in the search for a "mentality"; his analyses of judicial rhetoric are especially illuminating.

Venetian judges tended to treat with leniency cases of simple fornication, rape of women of equal or lower social status, and adultery; or perhaps it would be truer to say that they treated these as lying somewhere between crimes and civil torts, themselves taking on a role as mediators by using variable penalties to bring pressure upon the delinquent to make the most appropriate amends. The seducer or rapist – and given a singularly violent pattern of love-making not too much distinction was made between the two – might be sentenced to provision of a dowry and to a prison term liable to remission if he married his "victim".

In cases of adultery, a prime aim of the judges was to reconstitute the family unit

rather than to punish sin: remission of sentence might be used as an inducement to an erring wife to return to her husband, given guarantees of humane treatment (erring husbands were not an object of judicial concern). Severe penalties were incurred however by the man or woman who raped or seduced above their station. An especially grave offence was fornication with nuns, the "brides of Christ"; this was an "injury to God", and stigmatized as sacrilege together, curiously, with fornication for sodomy was exceptionally savage and here judicial rhetoric took on a peculiarly religious character. The state became increasingly preoccupied with homosexual sodomy and concerned to uncover it, and in the policy of the Venetian and other governments towards it the author detects the growth of a pathological fear comparable to the early-modern witch-craze. The threat of divine vengeance was considered an imminent one, particularly in the great age of plague.

Ruggiero shows some acquaintance with fifteenth-century preaching, and more specifically that of St Bernardino of Siena, but he has not analysed its content and language to any degree. Venetian government policy here, as also indeed in the areas of sumptuary legislation and prosecution of blasphemy, may be related to the preaching of friars on the "wrath of God", which meant that punishments in this world would fall upon communities; but the perceptions of statesmen of the evils which incurred it were doubtless different from those of preachers. Ruggiero suggests tentatively that "sodomy threatened to undermine the basic organizational units of society – family, male-female bonding, reproduction – which struck at the heart of social self-perceptions".

Notwithstanding Professor Ruggiero's close focus on the judicial documents pertaining to particular categories of crime, this book is of major interest for students of "mentality" and also those of the early-modern state and its legal institutions.

Status statistics

J. K. Hyde

DAVID HERLIHY and CHRISTIANE KLAPISCH-ZUBER
Twelve and their Families: A study of the Florentine catasto of 1427
404pp. Yale University Press. £32.
0 300 03056 8

The publication of *Les Toscans et leurs familles* in 1978 marked a milestone in the emergence of the new discipline of historical demography. By the then-novel use of the computer, it was possible to supply the bottom line to the mass of data collected by the precocious bureaucracy of the Florentine commune so as to portray with a high degree of accuracy and detail the distribution of persons and wealth not simply, as is usual with medieval records, within a minor or other small community, but throughout a territorial state of a considerable size equal to about half the area of the state of Massachusetts. Complied with a view to locating taxable wealth, the sixty volumes of *catasto* records detail the economic resources of some 60,000 households including around 260,000 persons with remarkably accurate information concerning age, marital status and relationship to the head of the household. The data concerning professions and occupations are much less satisfactory and are further weakened by the authors' understandable decision to process only the names of household heads. Another limitation is the almost completely synoptic character of the first *catasto*, whose thoroughness was never approached by earlier or later surveys. However, the unprecedented inclusion of individuals of all ages from the new-born to the old does allow the reconstruction of the fluctuating birth and death rates over two or three generations, which clearly show the catastrophic impact of bubonic plague. Again, although migrations are only sketchily recorded, the inclusion of the cities and the rural areas within a single survey makes it possible to show the relationship between city and *contado* in quantitative terms and measure the degree to which Florence had become the economic capital of the whole region. Not content with setting out these and other findings from the *catasto* in an extended text liberally illustrated with maps and tables, David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber also attempted to set the evidence in context by recourse not only to other documentary sources such as notarial registers and the Florentine Books of the Dead, but also to liter-

ary texts such as personal *ricordanze* and treatises on morality and household management.

In abridging this lengthy work for translation, the authors rejected the idea of concentrating on the *catasto*, its makers and the subjects of contemporary concern; the opening chapter deals with these matters in about one third of the space given to them in the French edition and, in particular, the pages describing the political circumstances surrounding its creation disappear entirely. The next three chapters, which describe the territorial distribution of the population, population changes and the factors affecting them, and the distribution of wealth between classes and between town and country, represent a reduction of approximately 50 per cent on the first edition. By contrast, the following six chapters, which are devoted to the factors of sex and age, marriage, births, death and household structures are hardly cut at all, no doubt indicating that Herlihy and Klapisch regard these hard-core demographic data as the nub of the work. Finally, of the last three chapters of the French edition which draw heavily on sources other than the *catasto* in order to examine contemporary images of the family, only the first, on blood kinship and affines, is retained; one of the sections sacrificed is a rather useful analysis of the contracts and ceremonies involved in a Florentine marriage. Since all the appendices are lost, the tables reduced from eighty-five to fifty-nine and the maps from sixty-nine to twenty-eight, specialists will need to continue to consult the French edition.

The overall effect of the abridgement is to concentrate attention on the household as the basic taxable unit; sadly, adult servants are not considered, since they were taxed separately. The conclusions drawn from the *catasto* evidence challenge many long-standing assumptions about the nature of medieval society. Particularly striking features are the disproportionate numbers of the very young and very old, the excess of males over females, the great age difference between spouses giving rise to a substantial pool of nature but unmarried men, and a surprising number of very small households, particularly in the city. These facts are well established with considerable statistical expertise, but Herlihy and Klapisch repeatedly leap beyond them to suggest connections in the area of morality and social ideals, where their treatment of the evidence is much less critical. The authors' conjectures make for lively reading but they do not merit the credence which is due to the more solidly based findings of this remarkable book.

MALCOLM LOWRY
Remembered
GORDON BOWKER

Malcolm Lowry
A hopeless drunk or a literary genius?
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THE WHITE TRIBE OF AFRICA
DAVID HARRISON

The Afrikaners
A nation destined to isolation and violence?
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Of magistrates and mobs

Penelope Corfield

ROBERT NEWTON
Eighteenth Century Exeter
192pp. University of Exeter Press. £7.95.
0859892557

Affection for provincial capitals is a durable, if understated, English tradition. It is expressed decorously, even wryly, but affirmatively, in a subtle combination of localism and urbanism. Whereas reactions to London were lavishly represented (from Hell-upon-Earth to Streets-paved-with-Gold, or sometimes both simultaneously), the country's "little Londons" were appreciated in more measured terms. This poised and affectionate study of one eighteenth-century provincial capital helps to explain that tradition, which it also represents.

Robert Newton gives a sympathetic interpretation of Exeter's urban community, viewed from both within and outside its Council chamber. Much attention is devoted to the useful and unglamorous continuities of local administration; but much also to the sharper upheavals of party politics and heated electoral disputes, when money, drink and issues circulated in excitable combination. As the author points out, he offers a "portrait rather than an analysis". There is relatively little engagement with wider controversies. In particular, he makes no reference to the debates that are currently animating the study of "the new eighteenth century". Implicitly, the conceptual framework here is whiggish, but restrainedly so, in keeping with his general approach. Eighteenth-century Exeter is held to have experienced eventual progress, both constitu-

tionally and environmentally. There is even a suggestion of long-term moral improvement. Yet at the same time, Newton expresses some dismay at the city's gradual economic eclipse during this period, as it lost its role as a major textile centre, and as Exeter/Topsham struggled unsuccessfully to remain an international port. Its "Georgian high noon" was not without its thunderclouds.

One theme to stand out is the importance attached to civic dignity and to protocol. Two very different encounters with monarchy illustrate local sensitivities. In mid-November 1688, Exeter Corporation had the testing experience of being the first official body to encounter the invading William of Orange, then a treasonous claimant to a legally occupied throne. The Bezonian dilemma was acute, with an actual King in London but a potential king at the gates. Hesitant, the Mayor refused to sanction an official welcome, and many councillors, with the Bishop and Dean, fled. Only two of the twenty-four-strong Corporation met William on his ceremonial arrival, although the city crowds were enthusiastic. Such official caution was rapidly put to shame, as opinion across the country rallied to the invader. By way of penalty, Exeter then had the humiliating experience of being placed by William under the rule of a military governor, Sir Edward Seymour, the city's Recorder and MP. He in turn attracted much hostility, and in the 1690s was both derided as "Sir Chuffier" and attacked as "Tsar Semskeye" by his many local opponents.

There was a jovial counterpoint to this tense episode in another royal visit 100 years later. Then the Corporation was ready with its salutations, but the monarch was instead reluc-

tant. In August 1789, George III went on progress through the south-west, and was greeted in Exeter with illuminations and a procession. However, with dynasty secure but health uncertain, the King declined to attend a municipal feast in the Guildhall. He preferred a quiet tour of the Cathedral, accompanied by the Bishop. Thereupon an angry alderman had to be restrained from forcibly remonstrating with the errant monarch, and was intercepted by the Dean, described as "very civil and in high glee". In general, the Corporation appreciated the merits of festivity to such an extent that the annual mayoral duties included giving at least sixteen official dinners - at a rate of one every twenty-three days.

By contrast with the conservatism of official Exeter, the urban community itself was notably pluralistic. As with many old textile centres, it had a very strong dissenting tradition, which offered an alternative ethos to the prevalent Tory Anglicanism of the Corporation. This theme could have been developed further, especially as Exeter ministers were prominent in the Trinitarian controversies that fractured early eighteenth-century nonconformity. The city also had a lively tradition of political disputation, with its relatively open franchise and sequence of expensively contested elections. A local bard penned the sub-Popean *Mobiad*, in tribute to popular participation: it

announced its subject uncompromisingly, "Of Mobs, and Mischiefs which from Mobbing spring". In the later eighteenth century, Exeter also displayed considerable support for political radicalism. There were local defenders of John Wilkes, and the church bells were rung on his release from prison in 1774. When an unpopular minister was invited to Exeter to receive the freedom in 1769, he was greeted with hostile crowd demonstrations. He found them at first "very outrageous", later revised to "extremely outrageous", as he was pursued through the Cathedral to eventual refuge in the Bishop's palace.

It made for an urban community that was finite enough to be comprehensible, yet large enough to be heterogeneous and diversified. Exeter was a city that could be readily perambulated, yet had its own areas of specialization, from the spacious High Street houses of the oligarchs to the crowded industrial premises in the West Quarter, where dwelt "the rugged chieftains of the Mob". It was a major regional capital, focus for a notable regional identity. This study therefore comes fittingly from a scholar with "an intimate knowledge of Exeter's streets and gradients" and love for the Devon countryside. Sadly, the volume is published posthumously; but this detailed and lively chronicle of magistrates and mobs contributes to an enduring tradition.

Damping the fire

Linda Colley

RICHARD MIDDLETON
The Bells of Victory: The Pitt-Newcastle Ministry and the conduct of the Seven Years' War 1757-1762
251pp. Cambridge University Press. £25.
0521265460

The civilized notion that war has no real victors has never been more emphatically disproved than in the Seven Years War between Britain and France. After an uncertain not to say embarrassing start, we won a series of resoundingly named battles - Plassey, Wandewash, Quiberon and Quebec - and conquered vast swathes of territory in Canada, India and the Caribbean. Since most of these colonies were retained even after the loss of America, there never was in fact a "Fall of the First British Empire"; nor in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was there much doubt about who should be credited with its creation. William Pitt, 1st Earl of Chatham, was lauded by Edmund Burke, by W. E. H. Lecky and by Lord Macaulay: "the ardour of his soul", wrote the latter, "set the whole kingdom on fire". Even in our own century the *DNB* pronounced that Pitt's autobiography during the Seven Years War was to be found in the history of the world.

Yet Pitt is far less prominent in the departmental correspondence preserved at the Public Record Office, and these are the sources which underpin Richard Middleton's highly intelligent and elegant piece of revisionism. He challenges the epic version of the Seven Years War by pointing first to the impersonal ingredients of British success. Britain's credit system was superb; her population was buoyant, making more cannon-fodder available; and the Bourbon powers of France and Spain were divided for most of the conflict. Second, the geographical scale of the war and the complexity of its administration meant that it had to be won by team-work, not by one heaven-born minister. The necessary cash was mobilized by the Duke of Newcastle who enjoyed (as Pitt did not) the confidence of Whig MPs and the City of London. Military prodigies like James Wolfe owed their appointment not to Pitt but to George II and the equally antique Lord Ligonier. And when commanders like Clive and Hawke joined battle, it had to be on their own initiative: London and its politicians were simply too distant to dictate.

Not, Middleton tells us, that Pitt had a pre-conceived grand design he wanted to dictate. At the beginning of the war he refused to send British troops to Germany and demanded a naval attack on the French coast. By 1758 he had changed his mind on both strategies. After

leaving office in October 1761 he condemned the peace negotiations with France as being unduly placatory; yet earlier he had seemed willing to give up even Canada to secure a settlement.

Too much is perhaps made of this kind of tergiversation, which characterized the entirety of Pitt's political career. One wonders indeed whether Middleton's account of the war - excellently researched and lucid though it is - has not been somewhat distorted by an excessive determination to use Pitt as an Aunt Sally. Of course some biographers of Pitt have suffered from what Macaulay styled the disease of excessive admiration. But few serious scholars have given Pitt sole credit for the war or maintained that his gifts were administrative: they were not.

What is interesting and what Middleton does not really explain is why so many contemporaries - at all social levels - believed that the Seven Years War was pre-eminently Pitt's war. Middleton dismisses Pitt's contribution as being "primarily parliamentary", but this is surely to miss the point. It was Parliament which brought together the country's ruling élite; it was Parliament which voted supplies for the war; and speeches in Parliament - if they were Pitt's - could reach out to the nation. As Churchill's speeches remind us, rhetoric matters in wartime. Those who doubt it should consider an earlier eighteenth-century conflict, the War of the Spanish Succession. It was characterized by a series of British victories quite as brilliant as those achieved in the Seven Years War, but it was profoundly controversial inside Parliament and without because no war minister was available to appeal to the civilian imagination and mobilize consent.

So why - other than to lend polemic to his book - is Middleton so inclined to debunk Pitt? First, and in the best whiggish tradition, because he is writing in the spirit of his times. In the eighteenth century Pitt was an outsider; today his bellicosity, imperialism and authoritarian temperament make him seem too much of an insider to be an acceptable hero. Second, academic historians tend to admire those politicians of the past who are rational, assiduous scribblers - people rather like them in fact. Hence the busy Duke of Newcastle, who played Tonto to Pitt's Lone Ranger at the time, is now almost a cult figure among research historians. By contrast, Pitt, who was erratic, theatrical, sporadically brilliant and wrote too few letters, arouses profound scholarly distrust. But what most dims Pitt's luminosity in this book is its overwhelming concentration on administrative history. The bells of victory needed more than sophisticated bureaucracy to make them ring, just as British history needs more than the Public Record Office to give it resonance.

After the trembling of prestige

Adam Mars-Jones

PETER TAYLOR
The Old Forest
358pp. Chatto and Windus/Hogarth Press.
£9.95.
0701139676

Of the American masters of the short story, Peter Taylor has perhaps the narrowest range; his stories of the last four decades take as their subject social lives in the southern states, primarily Tennessee, in the 1930s and 40s. He is serious about this society, with its complex calibrations of privilege, and accepts it more or less at its own valuation; to him St Louis, Missouri, is "a Northern city", just as it is for his character Mrs Amy Tolliver.

There is real love and real knowledge in these stories. One character reflects: "It is certainly not the new do-it-yourself ranch-house district that means Chatham to me . . . It is the block after block of modest two-story houses, built thirty to forty years ago now, that seem most typical and give me a really comfortable feeling. It was the people in those houses who managed to keep paying something on their loans during the Depression . . . I think first of those bungalows built of good wire-cut brick, with red and orange tile roofs and big screened porches, of the little private hedges that divide their sixty-foot lots, and of the maples and oaks and sycamores whose summer shade their front yards share."

Love and knowledge of a time and place, though, can as easily produce an architectural historian or a popular conversationalist as a writer; and there is in fact a tendency in Taylor's work to soften the conflicts in the material in a way that restricts his achievement as a literary artist.

There is little in this volume that relies on conventional drama; even the story called "The Death of a Kinsman" concerns itself with reaction rather than event, with the funeral arrangements rather than the death itself, which has already occurred when the story opens. The drama takes place internally, in an individual's perception of rights and duties, of similarities and difference.

Typically, the central character will define himself or herself as different from another, as an insider rather than an outsider, until a momentary revelation forces reassessment. Then resentment of the outsider's claims gives way to pity, and bonds that had always been there, without being noticed, are given their due at last.

This is a very satisfactory formula (crudely distilled here from a range of variants), except that it establishes an opposition only to dissolve it; and it seeks to heal breaches in the texture of society rather than examine them more neutrally. In the first story of the book, for instance, "The Gift of the Prodigal", an unprospering widower awaits the visit of a son who has never been anything but trouble. By the end of the story, although the troublesome son has yet to make his request, the father has acknowledged to himself that this son provides something that his obedient children can never offer, and that he himself depends on the black sheep's aberrance. This is a highly effective as rhetoric; and only second time around is the reader likely to notice that there is real casual corruption in this patriarch (who for instance puts a stabler out of business to avenge wrong done to the prodigal son), whom the story has rehabilitated so smoothly.

Taylor's characters tend to take up their lives unchanged after the brief trembling of their prestige; his loyalty is to the status quo, and he endures a stretched but still viable gentility. The narrator of "The Little Cousins", for instance, grapples with the present day before embarking on reminiscence: "There is no telling what the practices are out there in St Louis now. Children have it much better everywhere nowadays. Perhaps they flock to the Velled Shelter Hotel for breakfast afterward." This is characteristic in its wary acceptance of social change, as long as social structures remain unaltered. Children? If need be. The Velled Shelter? Always.

The class system of these stories has a number of anomalies, areas of immunity or special oppression, particularly where it crosses the system of race. An impoverished character in one story ("Rain in the Heart") complains:

There's no Negro in this town that will do housework for less than two and a half a day, and they pay us whites only a dollar . . . Because they can boss them . . . Just because they can boss them around. I say to a certain person the other day, "You can't boss me around like a nigger, no ma'am."

This passage is unusually stark in its conflict for a Peter Taylor story; and perhaps it is significant that it is given to a minor character, and that the supposed foreground of the story seems bland by contrast.

The title story of the volume, by some way the longest, deals with another anomaly; with a generation of women who seemed quite happy to be outside the pale, and who enjoyed a paradoxical protection from authorities who still took it for granted that women were men's responsibility. The narrator has a car accident the week before his marriage; in the car with him, innocently enough, is a woman of the type one accompanies to rough night spots but does not marry. In shock, or for some other reason, she runs away from the accident and disappears. In a detective story she would be easy to trace; but Taylor is interested in the crisis her absence provokes, in the vulnerability of established people during those four nerve-racking days when it seems that the engagement may be broken off.

There is, though, something unduly airy in Taylor's delineation of the *demi-monde*: "they were the daughters also of bank clerks and salesmen and of professional men, too, because they made no distinction among themselves . . ." It is to the author and heroes of these stories that distinctions in classes other than their own are less than momentous; and Taylor no sooner opens up an unknown area than he appropriates it. In the same character's tribute to the servants of those bygone days there is also a false note:

There was not, in those days in Memphis, any time or occasion when one felt more secure and relaxed than when one had given oneself over completely to the care and protection of the black servants who surrounded us and who created and sustained for the most part the luxury which distinguished the lives we lived then from the lives we live now. They did so for us, whatever their motives and however degrading our demands and our acceptance of their attentions may have been to them.

This would be handsome praise for an equal; but it is bizarre to eulogize your servants as if their service was a free quixotic act. Perhaps the passage is ironical, but if so it seriously undermines the story; and irony in Taylor's work tends to be local and (so to speak) homeopathic, lightly pre-empting a hostile reaction.

There is certainly no irony in this, the coda to "Bad Dreams":

Who is there that can imagine the things that such a dirty, ignorant old tramp of a Negro thinks when he is alone at night, or dreams about when he sleeps? Such pathetic old tramps seem, somehow, to have moved beyond the reach of human imagination. They are too unlike us, in their loneliness and ignorance and age and dirt, for us even to guess about them as people. It may be necessary for us, when we meet them in life or when we encounter them in a story, to treat them not as people but as symbols of something we like or dislike. Or is it possible to suppose, for instance, that their bad dreams after all - to the very end of life, and in the most hopeless circumstances - are only like Bert's and Emmaline's? Is it possible that this old fellow has been awakened tonight from a miserable dream of his own childhood in some little town or on some farm in that vague region which the Tollivers called West Tennessee?

This is Taylor's authorial persona at its least sympathetic, arch, trivially patrician, pretending to a warmth and authority that are outside his range. And though his stories contain much that is subtle about the dependence of insiders on outsiders, of white on black, his priority is too consistently to keep things together as they are, or as they were, for him to be plausible as an anatomist of his chosen culture.

The factory factor

J. R. Harris

MAXINE BERG
The Age of Manufactures: Industry, innovation and work in Britain 1700-1820
378pp. Fontana. Paperback, £4.95.
0006860192

Maxine Berg deservedly enjoys the reputation of being one of the more lively and adventurous of the younger generation of economic and social historians. Her new book has many good qualities. She has done a formidable amount of reading, especially among newer writers on British and European economic and social history; and this updating is very welcome. She is probably right to believe that writing on the rise of industrialization in Britain has been too long dominated by views of economists on economic growth which were conceived in the late 1950s and early 60s. There has been a real need to look much more closely at British industry in the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century, and at all the regions which had a significant industrial production.

Dr Berg starts with a survey of British industrial development in the eighteenth century, drawing on some of the statistical estimates of recent times, though she has reservations about the "skeletal suggestions" derived from the indices. Then she surveys briefly some of the ideas of eighteenth-century economic thinkers which she considers relevant, though she does not quite explain away their inability to sense or evaluate current technical change - witness the mid-century writers who looked to the immigration of foreign artisans to reduce wages and improve discipline in English industry just when the emigration of English workers to import new technology to the Continent was gathering pace. Next, she examines two models of manufacture in the belief that the primitive accumulation of Marx and "proto-industrialization" have had a particular explicatory value for historians, though much research on British industry in this period has been little affected by the first, and the usefulness of the second has already been powerfully challenged. Berg herself has clearly been influenced by both, but believes that "the research still remains to be done to give these years an historical existence of their own". There is a good, undogmatic discussion of recent ideas about the agricultural origins of industry and of

the industrial decline of some regions. Her chapter on women's work and domestic manufacture opens up a new field and presages a British interest in the subject like that which has developed in recent American studies of women and technology.

In the second part of the book Berg examines the paths which led to the Industrial Revolution, paying special attention to the development of industry and technology by hand-tools and small machinery. After a chapter on technological diffusion, in which she maintains that this has been too narrowly considered from the viewpoint of factor inputs and price responses, she concludes by examining work organization and technology in textiles, then in the metal and hardware trades.

The book raises problems, particularly as an introduction to eighteenth-century industry for students. Berg admits that her treatment of the industrial scene as a whole is unbalanced. Having been told that "the fuel which was the key to the British path of technical transformation was coal" we hardly hear of it again, though production grew from 3 million tons in about 1700 to 15 million tons at the century's end, nor of the relation between fuel and technological development. If this was "the age of manufactures" it was so in (to modern readers) a special use of the term. Berg does not propose "proto-industrialization" as a satisfactory explanation, but she seems to shield the term from D. C. Coleman's devastating attack upon it as a dynamic model of British industrialization, and continues to use it widely and loosely throughout the book.

There are signs of haste and pressure in the writing too; and some statements are distinctly odd. To say that the Jenny, of all inventions, "was invented in a factory unit" is more than disconcerting and not excused by the emendation a couple of pages later. The Birmingham Metal Company of 1780 was not just an artisan's co-operative and it was set up to oppose a brass makers', not a brass founders', monopoly. Shropshire was hardly "burnt out" as an industrial region in 1815 when it was, even if in relative decline, still the third ironmaking district of Britain.

However, Dr Berg's book, though it sometimes annoys, provokes thought and the reconsideration of many accepted views uncritically held. One shares her final hope for a reconciliation between the social and the economic history of the period.

Winter not too far behind

D. J. Enright

DAI HOUYING
Stones of the Wall
Translated by Frances Wood
313pp. Michael Joseph. £9.95.
0718125886

Late last year a small party of British writers visited China as guests of the Chinese Writers' Association. There we met a writer whose English was virtually confined to Shelley's uplifting line, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" Like many other intellectuals, he had been pilloried during the anti-cultural Cultural Revolution and made to clean latrines, a dirtier job than might be supposed. Through an interpreter we asked him, what we really shouldn't have done, how he felt when he came up against people who had persecuted him. He looked unhappy, and then declared, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

The lot of the Chinese writer is, and has long been, a far from happy one; the upturn in prosperity, in economic liberalization, doesn't at all certainly extend to him. A television set or a washing machine is a real acquisition, but freedom of expression is a political invitation and it can always be taken back. I formed the impression that many intellectuals in their middle age laboured under the feeling that if, as could be the case, Spring had come, then all the same Winter might not be too far behind.

Dai Houying's novel is a comprehensive, not to say crowded, account of a group of university teachers and their families in Shanghai in the late 1970s. Most have been in some sort of trouble in the past, either as "Rightists" according to the then régime or as "anti-Rightists" subsequently discredited by their activities on behalf of the said régime. Some were denounced or otherwise victimized by others among their colleagues, but all have suffered in some way. And suffering doesn't inevitably refine, for a past victim can himself become a victimizer in the present.

Castigation of the Gang of Four and expressions of horror over the Cultural Revolution (almost as if it were a visitation from Outer Space) are now permissible, if not *de rigueur*. That Dai Houying doesn't make much of this is to her credit: what she is preoccupied with is how people can overcome the past and live and work together in the future. It has to be said that to us the terminology of recent Chinese fiction is more remote and rebarbative than the word "foreign" would signify; it can raise our hackles, if it doesn't send us to sleep. How could a person who never had two yuan to rub together be called an "unrepentant capitalist"?

It is nice to hear the heroine, Sun Yue, asking, "Must we draw lines around people who've made political mistakes, to prove our revolutionary fervour? I thought we wanted to liberate all mankind", but even her own language is

often the reverse of liberating.

The hero, He Jingfu, though he is plainly a good person, will hardly endear himself to us when he "calls on" somebody, albeit somebody rather reprehensible, "to correct his error immediately", or when another character observes of his improving discourse that "They were interesting, these words full of dialectical materialism." He Jingfu divulges that, in the early 1960s, after he had been branded a "Grade One criminal" and sent into the countryside to work, he studied philosophy "in secret, working out an answer to the problem of how Marxism-Leninism should deal with human feeling". Granting that it took a brave and resolute person to do this, we may wonder that such a person never queried the Marxism-Leninism which had led to his plight.

We have to remind ourselves that we cannot easily tell when an intellectual, say, is sticking his neck out: what to us is merely a jacket button left undone can in that so different scene be a grave case of indecent exposure. Even this novel's Chinese title - "Man, Man!" or "Ah, Humanity!" - wouldn't get by in our world of books. Hence, presumably, the substitution of that perennially good thing and immutable symbol, the Great Wall.

Gangs come and gangs go, but political jargon, it seems, goes on for ever, and there is no escape from this deadening formulaic language even for gentle He Jingfu. Its applications shift, so that what was once evil, "Right-roadism", say, is still evil but has taken on a different guise; or what was out of the question, such as capitalism, can become tolerable or even desirable if accompanied by some such prefix as "socialist" or "guided" or "proletarian". The labels - some of them quite elaborate, like "divisor and demoralizer" - endure, the wearers change. The whole of life seems to be one huge reference book, with no provision for human individuality.

In her earlier life Sun Yue had confessed to a meeting of the entire student body that foreign capitalist literature had had a poisonous effect on her. Nowadays, we are told, she is fascinated by modern Western writing and says that "there are things we can learn from it, and that it should be introduced to the students". Perhaps she should be more cautious: only last year a Peking publication, duly quoting Engels, warned against overestimating the "bourgeois literary school" of Western modernism and advised writers to stick to native, mainstream revolutionary realism.

Like her hero, Dai Houying is a modest humanist. To do full justice to gradations of feelings she has overloaded her novel with testimonies, and it comes near to reading like the proceedings of some earnest and over-large conference. Remote from the stereotype of the inscrutable Oriental, her people agonize at length and converse in set speeches. Even in their occasional moods of light-heartedness they come out with things like "Take Mencius'

ideas on age . . ." and "That's very dialectical". Another offensive stereotyping comes to mind: where there is one Chinese, he smokes opium; where there are two, they gamble; where there are three, they form a political party.

Various attractions alleviate the conscientious grind of sorting out the doubtfully sortable, of distinguishing between the prematurely right and the retrospectively wrong, between the sincere and the opportunistic, and then seeking for modes of reconciliation. There are rare moments of solitary communion with nature, the Chinese safety valve; on one occasion, gazing at the Milky Way and the fixed stars of the Herd Boy and the Spinning Girl, He Jingfu tells himself he is not a shooting star, but "a person with feelings, with love and hate". Such moments are suffused with love of country, "that endless yellow dust", which, whatever crimes have been committed in its name, is undeniably strong and deep.

There are flashes of ironic amusement - though the irony and the comedy are all ours - as when we hear that in Sun Yue's youth primary schoolchildren were taken into the fields and made to eat their lunch sitting next to a dung heap in order to imbibe "proletarian feelings". There are the brief anecdotes of classmates reminiscing together, and the recording of little acts of spontaneous kindness. But most cheering are the young people, relatively untouched by the burden of history and able to see things with an innocent yet sharp eye and to speak about them frankly. One of them tells He Jingfu: "Your generation was like a blank sheet of paper; as soon as you met any colour, you were dyed. You all banded your heads till the blood flowed, some became stupid, some became dumb and some died."

We are probably happy when the ending comes, and we are certainly happy that it is a happy ending of sorts, in that the heroine and the hero finally get together after much heart-searching and many noble offers of self-sacrifice. It even looks as though He Jingfu's "very brave book" about "Marxist humanism, which wants each person to become a free individual" will eventually be passed for publication despite opposition from the university Party committee. "On the football field, the referee is signalling 'take a break'", a character called "The Writer" explains in a homely metaphor: "The problem is suspended", adding in a rather mixed one of more general application, "How can we get rid of this tangle if our hands are tied?"

Stones of the Wall cannot be said to be a "good read"; it is of no aesthetic interest whatsoever. But - aside from inducing further apprehension in those who are nervous of political ideologies - it has very considerable documentary value for anyone interested in China. It is, in what we see as the characteristically unrealistic way of the genre, a realist novel. And, I guess, it too is a brave book.

Eric Korn

I've always had a soft spot for Madagascar, if only because the people are called Malgache, which sounds as if it ought to mean a soft spot ("I was abseiling down the bergschrund when I dropped my karabiners into a malgache"), and because of the soft musicality of their language. "Tsaroko ny tsikin'ny androko omaly/ Izay manjary aloka foana, indrialy!" sings J. J. Rabearivelo in *Love Song*, which may be rendered (courtesy K. Katzner, *Languages of the World*, Routledge and Kegan Paul) "I recall the joys of days gone by / They waned alas to flit away!"

But when I read that an armoured division of the Malagasy Army had been called in to destroy the *dojo* of an intransigent karate sect which had been terrorizing peaceable tourists (or, according to others, brutally to extirpate the only democratic opposition) I thought it was time to be better informed. So I bought *Aretina Sy Panastiranana* by Dr Andrew Davidson (Antananarivo, 1876). This is evidently a medical text (there are sections on Beriberi, Skrofula and Aretina Addison) and, judging from the preface and acknowledgements to, among others, "Dr Warburton Begbie, Indrialy!", it was written in Malagasy by Dr Davidson of Edinburgh and the NY Friends' Foreign Mission. This must be one of the first Western medical texts in a sub-Saharan language (I'm not counting papyri on the therapeutic applications of *mwmk*) but is none the less unintelligible for that, even the manuscript bits in English on the interleaved blank pages:

Joseph Rampur, formerly an attendant at the asylum. His habits were not temperate, but he occasionally took too much rum. Guarding cattle on "Chanane" estate in Black River, which is a malarial locality. He got his wages one evening and he and two other companions bought a "chopine" of rum each. He drank his own share, was intoxicated, and rapidly developed into that maddening physician's cryptography which denies us the end of the story, although the word dysentery can be made out, likewise enteritis and either "sucumbed" or "recovered".

So I hunted up a copy of G. W. Parter's *Concise Grammar of Malagasy* (Trubner 1883); proceeding backwards, I have only reached the last chapter, which deals with interjections. *Endray!* (ah! oh!) *E. O. Ray!* (Bh! Ho! Hal) *Endral!* (Oh! that! Would that!) and *Indrialy!* (Alas!). *Indrialy!* (Alas!), although by now familiar, is a bit of a problem, because OED says it means "Lo, Behold!" or possibly "He is over yonder!" and it tells the story of Pierre Sonnerat (*fi* in Madagascar: c1780) ambling through the tropical rain forest when a new species of lemur swam into his ken. "Indril (Lo, Behold!)", or possibly "Indri izyl (He is over yonder!)", cried his faithful Malgache tracker, whereas the Gallic juggins wrote "Indris = espèce de lémur" on his shirt-cuff. We all know that what he had seen is in reality called a *babakoto* or *babacoot* (*Lichanotis brevicaudatus*), but a lie or a misunderstanding can go around the world while the truth is putting its boots on, especially if the truth is a lemur, noted for its sloth. The sloth ("for al, from its plaintive cry") is Latin American, not to be confused with the Malagasy aye-aye, which goes aye-aye and sounds like a Latin-American dance. Lloyd's A1 is different again. I could go on . . . but "*Sanatrialy*" I hear you exclaim (Forbid that - I). The interjection *sanatrialy* had "perhaps" (I am quoting G. W. Parker) the following mode of origin: it is a plant used medicinally by the Malagasy; it is also the name given to an earthen pot daubed with streaks of coloured paint in accordance with the directions of the incantation worker. The pot is carried to the place where the disease had its origin and is believed to attract the disease to itself, and is consequently left there, the person who leaves it exclaiming "*Sanatrialy*" (May it - [=the disease - be *sandrialy*]).

I turned to *Curiosities of the Vegetable Kingdom* (SPCK 1849 or thereabouts) to find out more about the plant, but the only Malagasy vegetable which figured was the tanghien tree, a poisonous plum used to test for witchcraft or other crime. The accused is made to eat as much boiled rice as possible, followed by three pieces of chicken skin "about the size of a dollar". He then drinks the tanghien scrapings

mixed with banana juice, is ritually comminated by the *panozondoha*, and made to drink large quantities of rice-water "till the stomach rejects its contents; when if the three pieces of skin are found all is well, the party is pronounced *madio*, legally and morally innocent". If they are not, he is inconspicuously brained by the bystanders, using the very vice-pestle involved in the rite. A fortiori, if he dies without vomiting, he was even guiltier, and serve him right. (Compare and contrast with the philosophy of English witch-finding ordeals, where the victim's death proves innocence, tough luck, lass, but we'll give you a grand funeral.) A skilful *panozondoha* could select ripe or unripe fruit according to his personal feelings, and the accused person's means. It was observed that the rich were hardly ever found guilty by the tanghien-test. If I add that it was customary to seize a few bystanders to serve as experimental controls (poor persons, by and large) and submit them to the test to show that the poison really was poisonous and there was no possibility of corruption, you may well wish to perform *mifady ahitra*, the adjuration of the grass. Do this by plucking a piece of grass from the ground and hold it up, as to express "May such misfortunes be far from us as we would avoid treading on the very grass of the village where such sorrow dwells". Or you might prefer to take your chance with the karate team.

★ ★ ★

Recently reading, and enjoying, J. L. Carr's *Battle of Pollock's Crossing*, I never supposed that his fictional hero's abandoned literary enterprise, *Gidner's Brief Lives of the Frontier*, was other than fictitious. But I was wrong, and a handsome woodcut-illustrated pamphlet of sixteen pages, published of course by the tireless J. L. Carr, has dropped through my letter-box with a plop of soft reproach. It is number 77 in what even the publisher cannot describe more precisely than as "a series of small books" (*Selected Poems of Skelton* came with it), the cost is as derisory as the size is nugatory or possibly vice versa, and I don't know how I have managed for so long without the information it contains, not a word of which I believe. Well, I grant you William F. Cody ("some have drily argued that the buffalo was named after him and not him for the buffalo") or Theodore Roosevelt ("inclined to avoid funerals as he could not be the body"), but who can give credence to Nettie Cook Dramsdahl, blown sky-high by a cyclone while hiding in a book-box in Beadle County, S Dakota ("a place highly thought of by this publisher"), especially in view of the circumstantial detail: "At a height of 60 feet the house imploded, dropping these pioneer aviators amongst their surviving possessions - five dishes, a Singer sewing-machine, a stove lid, the house-dog attached to a wheel-spoke, and that part of Nettie's doll which says 'Mamma!'" Or to an Indian scout named Pierre Trudeau, who blinded a rattlesnake with a jet of tobacco-juice while hiding from the Cheyenne? Or Min and Gus, two cattlemen of Montana, after whom Mingueville was named (later changed to Wibauxville after a more successful cattlemen)? Or Stepladder Nell, "an amiable hostess, much favoured by short men, last heard of in Huron, Dakota Territory"? Or yet Phobias Quasho, who wore what was thought to be an immortality-bestowing coat of Spanish mail dug from a Florida tomb, but was fatally and accidentally shot by a losing competitor in the archery contest he was judging? Where they are not improbable, the biographical data are not of an elevating tendency. Alexander Culbertson won the hand of an Indian princess whose beauty was certified by Audubon: "despite his royal connections and dexterity on the fiddle, this man did not win advancement and grew dissolute and (it is said) his wife fat". Or Julia Bullette, "ravishingly lovely Comstock courtesan", a less than pure snowflake of yesterday. "Her murderer, John Millin, having pleaded extenuation on the grounds that he could speak French, was solaced during his last days by meals of paté-de-fôie-gras cooked by grateful mothers and wives." The only one of this deplorable company who was not either shot or hanged was John March, an impoverished scholar of Harvard who hung out his Diploma in English Literature as a shingle, and armed

with Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* and Platt's *Celebrated Home Doctor*, practised poetically licensed medicine in Pueblo City: who, "taking payment in hides, gold dust and favours, wrenched out teeth, delivered babies and saved off limbs", and earned enough to buy a county-sized ranch on the San Joaquin Valley. Now there's an exemplary life. *Gidner's Brief Lives*, and four-score other titles, are available at 40 pence each from J. L. Carr, 27 Mill Dale Road, Kettering, and from sound bookpeople everywhere.

★ ★ ★

Went to the Zoo to examine their Indris, but was lost in admiration for the unsung heroes of the Adopt-An-Animal Scheme. Not the popstars and multinationals who fund gazelles and lions and giraffes, but the homely folk who put their pennies behind the Undistinguished Flycatcher (*Muscivora subfusca*) or the Lesser Grey Newt. A modest lady had adopted a sea anemone; Bumble the Cat has sponsored an Octopus, which is cheek; some people called Turtle (Myrtle and Bertie, since you ask) claim to be backing a Turtle; a locksmith is funding a kea; Class 3T are fostering a school of piranha. The whole scheme is rich in moral ambiguities, pregnant with opportunities for projection, introjection, abreaction, acting-out and generally acting up . . . Fostering-suitability interviews in the Pangolin House. Candidates wait here please.

"Like to adopt an animal would you?" "Only if it is entirely convenient, my Lord." "Come for your pound of flesh-eater, I suppose?"

"No, no, Sire, an ounce will do. Or a serval, a wolverine, a polecat, a stoat, even a bad-tempered vole."

"Why you whey-faced bean eater, what claim have you to such an aristocrat of the animal kingdom? Half share in a hedgehog is more your mark, I warrant you. Coming in here with your sweaty half-crowns, imagining you can get custody of a cassowary, camel rides of a weekend, droit de seigneur over (though I say it as shouldn't) a rather attractive dugong, whose breasts have maddened generations of mariners. . ."

There's a sign near the Birds of Prey that looks like entries for the Booker Prize: "*Razorbill* by Felix D. Brunt. *Raven* by Jacqui Pitts and A. Nordmark."

But no one has adopted the Carrion Hawk, *Polyborus Planius*, the carancho or caracara. I always thought *carancho* was an obscenity frequently on the lips of the guttersnipes of Saragossa, while the *caracara* is a mournful keening *gauchesco* song, much heard in the Borgesian bars of the *Banda Oriental*, where, supping a lucent *bormacho*, a eucharistic potion at once frugal and stupendous, we become aware, in the momentary chink of the indifferent bartender's change, that we share in the libations that doomed Iphigenia, in Falstaff's sublime and evasive *crapula*, taste to the bitter dregs the self-accusing cup of the supernal and necessary traitor. In that late afternoon, under the leathery sun of the pampas, we are one with the headache that drove de Quincey to an alternative at once rational and onerous, we share the hemlock-cephalgia of Keats and Socrates, the temple-pain of doomed Sisyphus, the branded forehead of the first fratricide. In the moment of hangover each man sees in the mirror surface of his drink that he, finally, is Cain, his brother. (From "Doña Alvarez and the Cup", in *Narraciones*, Buenos Aires, 1943.)

★ ★ ★

The above was not composed on an Apple, an A.C.T. Apricot, a Kiwi (first, down-under computer), nor yet a Texas Instruments Strawberry ("Texas Strawberries bring a new flavour to word-processing"). It was not processed by WORDSTAR, SCRIPST, BRATO (Error Reduction and Text Over-write) nor yet CALLIOPE (Colloquial, Algebraic Literal Language / O Poetic Equivalent, nicknamed "Merry-Go-Round" from its bug-infested tendency to drop into iterative sub-routines). Nor yet was it run off by a daisy-wheel dot-matrix laser-guided inkjet nor by thermal transfer up to the kind of paper which scrolls resiliently into tight rolls, entrapping the read-

er's finger (come to think of it, Calliope is usually represented holding such a scroll, a Parnassus print-out).

It should have been so composed, though, and I have spent an entrancing week learning a miracle-working apparatus with a one-handed, five-key, micro-miniaturized keyboard, which miraculously turns one-to-five finger exercises into letters, punctuation, or commands to the machine, swift and silent and ideal for using in the British Library.

Unfortunately a slip or so of the thumb - and I was all thumbs - turns letter j into GOBACK TO LAST DOCUMENT SEPARATOR, turns capital K into PROCEED BACKWARDS THROUGH TEXT AT STADILY INCREASING PACE WHILE IGNORING PANIC-CRAZED FINGERTIPS DAB-BING AT EVERY KEY IN TURN and turns MWMK ("mwmk, ancient Egyptian for turquoise as well as acronymic for MAILER WASHES MUMMY'S KA, a tetragrammaton constantly on my lips) into OBLITERATE EVERYTHING I HAVE WRITTEN, the Hi-tec equivalent of Lady Isabel Burton or J. S. Mill's fire-kindling housemaid.

So it's back to the clay tablet and wedge for me, with exclamations of *Savirly* and *Carancho* whenever I make a mistake, and no place on my out-strewn desk for the twenty-first-century. But I do have room for a sweet-scented cylindrical calendar, inscribed with various symbols indicating the omens for the day. Unfortunately (*Indrialy*) the text is in Batak, an outmoded Indonesian script that looks like footprints in the snow, if it ever snows in Sumatra, but fortunately there is a mimeographed sheet of explanation in trade-English. Still more fortunately, I don't know how the Batak calendar interlocks with the one I use, so I have to ignore its advice, most of which is aposematic, or off-putting: "This is the pair of the pincers of scorpion. We must not organize the celebration on this day, as the scorpion is sure to catch the organizer with its pincers. This is the scorpions' belly. We must not organize a celebration on this day. Only those born on scorpion-days may do so. This is the scorpion's tail. We must not undertake anything on this day. Not even the following day." Nor does getting away from the scorpion make life easier: "This is 'alasungang' (i.e. antipode of scorpion). (on the days indicated this sign) We should be extremely careful, as they are murdered." Then there is the checker-board sign ("this is the sign of the fish day, i.e. host shall give his guests fish to eat. If he offers them meat he will have to face the ill-effects of his deed, his castle shall be killed in great number"), the desperate double fish-hook ("this is day which death. Everybody who undertakes anything shall die, according to the *dahu*"), and the scarcely less distressing sun-setting-in-cave (or igloo-underneath-flyover) sign: "He who undertakes something shall have stomach-ache." But most of my trouble, I now realize, comes from doing things on single-kidney-bean days: "This is day in favour of incompleteness; anything done on this day will only be done incompletely. Completion will only be possible when a parsill is offered." Pass the parsill, Mabel, and make sure it's well-mutured.

★ ★ ★

Treasures of the British Heritage, of How We Acquired Our Unique Charm (No XLIV in a slightly condescending series for tourists.)

Before 11 o'clock see that your waitress has plenty of cakes to serve with coffee and that these are arranged in dishes in a closed cupboard, where they will not get dry.

Coffee should be made overnight and strained off before 10 o'clock in the morning. Everything in the front of the shop should be ready to receive shoppers and coffee-drinkers by 10 am.

Chapter 8 - "The Day's Routine" - from *Running a Successful Teashop* by Oriselda Lamb (London: Jordan & Sons, 1947, 96pp, 5/-).

In the same series are R. G. Nettell's *Your Career in Poultry Breeding*, Phyllis Lovell's *Domestic Science: 30 Well Paid Careers*, and *I Want to Go to Sea* by Norman Lee, which goes into my private case alongside *The Middle Way* by Lao Tse and *The Weary Blues* by Langston Hughes and (when they become available) *The Crystalline Salad* by J. G. Ballard and *When ever Her name is by one or other Ains-*

Letters

'The Poems of Charlotte Brontë'

Sir, - In his review of *The Poems of Charlotte Brontë*, edited by Tom Winnifith (August 9), Greville Lindop remarks there have been "some problems with the proof-reading". I am afraid that the inaccuracy of this edition is more pervasive and more insidious than the obvious faults in proof-correction. In checking a sample of thirty-six manuscripts I noticed more than 100 substantive errors, many of them clearly deriving from misreading or omission of words, some perhaps from hasty reading without regard for the context. There are three errors in the three lines Mr Lindop quotes from the manuscript of "Mementos", which actually reads "these Chinese . . . these shells . . . this Venice glass". These are comparatively trivial, but there are a further fifteen errors in the same fragment, some of them making havoc of sense and syntax: lines 18 and 19 should read "Thus Lady Frances leaves her home / These English woods", not "When Lady Frances . . . English roads"; line 59 should describe "the arms that seek to cherish", not "they seek" (pp 336, 387). Dr Winnifith also fails to record a number of interesting alternative readings and deleted lines in this manuscript, including several lines beginning "These tiny portraits set in rings", a version used by Charlotte Brontë in her 1846 text.

On page 269 of the edition, "Ever" should indeed be "Even", as Lindop suggests; he might also with justice have wondered about the strange line 71, "Whenceforth at last shall reader", which proves to be "Whence earth at last . . .". But he could not be expected to guess that "ray and man" in line 8 of the same poem should be "ray and moan", or that "lofty" in line 82 should be "holy". In fact the volume is full of traps for the unwary reader: he cannot know that the "shine / Of power" (p 328) is "illusive", not "elusive", and that the land should hold "thy father's bones" not his "bower" (p 327), and that Charlotte Brontë did not write the word "far" at the end of a line on page 299.

Charlotte Brontë may well be a mediocre poet, as she was one of the first to admit: her poems, she told Mrs Gaskell in September 1850, were "chiefly juvenile productions; the restless effervescence of a mind that would not be still"; but as she had written to the publishers, Aylett and Jones, she was anxious that errors should not "throw an air of absurdity over a whole poem". Too many of Winnifith's errors do just that; and this is the more to be regretted in poems where an unusually direct and quite impressive immediacy of observation is achieved. What is the reader to make of Winnifith's weirdly surrealist "mean and phaeon" landscape on page 400? Charlotte Brontë wrote "wan and phantom". What does he suppose line 29 of the same poem - "I can only wonder as black as clouds" - may mean? The manuscript reads, "I see only woods as

black as clouds". Winnifith has mistranscribed eighteen of the thirty-three lines of this fragment. I have included a tentative reading of this poem, "A Week Ago September Dead", in my full review of the edition in the forthcoming *Brontë Society Transactions* - to which journal I would have been happy to confine my comments, had not Mr Lindop's review made wider publicity desirable. Dr Winnifith has made a number of valuable contributions to Brontë scholarship; I very much regret that this edition cannot be counted among them.

MARGARET SMITH,
33 Wheats Avenue, Birmingham.

Sir, - My review of *The Poems of Charlotte Brontë*, edited by Tom Winnifith (August 9), contained three errors of transcription which, owing to absence from Manchester, I was unable to correct at proof stage. For the record, may I please correct them now?

"Pilate's wife" should read "Pilate's Wife's Dream"; "The sun beams fierce" should read "The sun burns fierce"; and "kiss that tear away" should be "kiss the tear away".

Apologies to you, and to Dr Winnifith.

GREVILLE LINDOP,
Department of English Language and Literature,
University of Manchester, Manchester.

'The Airman and the Carpenter'

Sir, - The letters of Hugh Brogan and Ludovic Kennedy (June 14 and 21) in defence of Mr Kennedy's book, *The Airman and the Carpenter*, have introduced some additional matter that calls for an answer (delayed by my absence from home). The book is about the abduction and murder of the Lindbergh infant and the trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann for the crime.

Mr Kennedy disputes the testimony of William Frank regarding Hauptmann's finances. He has overlooked the fact that the specific figures quoted in my letter were matters of record, and were not disputed by the Hauptmann defence. These established Hauptmann's assets, as of the day of his arrest, as \$40,615 (at least \$400,000 in 1985 dollars). Also matters of record are the figures for Hauptmann's assets at the time of the crime: \$4,941 - \$203 in his bank account, twenty shares of Warner Bros. stock, worth about \$100, and the balance in a mortgage (1985 dollar equivalent at least \$50,000).

Kennedy further disputes my assertion that none of this startling increase in the Hauptmann fortune resulted from his work as a carpenter. Hauptmann's own testimony at his trial was that his earnings from carpentry after April 2, 1932, a period of over two years from the date of Lindbergh's ransom payment, amounted to "a couple of hundred dollars". I stand corrected. This leaves Kennedy with a mere \$35,674 to explain away.

Kennedy introduces in his letter the name of

Thomas Webb Williams, Bristol solicitor, died at St Mary's, Uplyme, nr Axminster, in December 1947: whereabouts of his manuscripts, or of any collection of manuscripts with which he had connections in the 1890s.

P. J. C. FIELD,
Department of English, University College, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG.

Sir Frank Athelstan Swettenham (1850-1946), Malaya 1871-1903: any information; for a biography: H. S. Barlow, PO Box 10139, Lot 2-24 2nd Floor, Bang Angkasa Raya, Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur, W Malaysia.

Frederick Wilson, naturalist, hunter and businessman, of Mussoorie and Harail (d 1880s): any material; for a biography.

D. C. Kala, Bija House, Talli Tal, Nainital, UP 263002, India.

Isabella Whitney (fl 1566-73), Elizabethan poet: whereabouts of letters, papers, copies of her books, *The Copy of a Letter and A Sweet Nocturne*, other than in the Bodleian Library and the British Library; for a biography and critical edition of her works.

Mike Felker,
Department of English, Texas Tech University,
Lubbock, Texas 79414, USA.

Isidor Fisch, who, according to Hauptmann, was the source of the money used in his stock-market speculations after 1932, and who had given him, so he claimed, the package containing gold certificates which had been handed by Lindbergh to the abductor. Fisch was a small-time dealer in furs, principally "Hudson seal" (dyed muskrat). He lived in poverty in New York, suffering from tuberculosis, returned to his native Germany and died there, a penniless dependant upon his family. His death occurred before the date of Hauptmann's arrest.

Hauptmann testified that Fisch owed him money, giving this as a reason for his spending a part of the gold certificates. At the time of Hauptmann's arrest \$14,600 in these certificates remained; the amount in the package originally was larger. Despite the complexity of the claimed Hauptmann-Fisch financial dealings, there was only a single entry in Hauptmann's account book showing a transaction with Fisch - the receipt of \$2,000 from him, which Hauptmann claimed he had repaid. There was no other note, book entry, or writing in any form to record the much larger alleged transactions. Despite this, Hauptmann wrote to Fisch's heirs claiming that the latter owed him \$5,500, which he had paid from his bank account. He was forced to admit that the part about his bank account was a fabrication, since no such withdrawal was shown, but he continued to claim that Fisch was indebted to him.

It is clear from all this that the Hauptmann story of his dealings with Fisch was a fabrication from beginning to end (except for the \$2,000). Being conveniently dead, Fisch could tell no tales. Mr Brogan's reference to Fisch as a "shady associate" is based entirely upon Hauptmann's self-serving assertions, and nothing else.

Kennedy objects to the testimony of Arthur Koehler regarding the piece of wood identified by him as a part of a floor-board present in Hauptmann's attic. This piece had been used in making the ladder employed in the Lindbergh abduction. Koehler's identification was based upon the distinctive pattern of growth-rings in both pieces of the wood, and on distortions in the grain carrying over from one part to the other. Such details form a pattern as reliable as a human fingerprint. Kennedy omits mention of these details, basing his objections on the supposed difficulty of removing the wood from the attic, and upon Hauptmann's "unnecessary task in having to plane off two superfluous inches" to reduce the width of the board. Kennedy is apparently unfamiliar with wood-working; rip-sawing is much easier and faster than planing. Even speedier would be crosscut nothing to a line and removal of the excess wood by a hatchet or broad hatchet. In either case, a few passes of the plane would suffice to smooth the edges.

Mr Brogan's letter (June 14) recommends the reading of Kennedy's book, and one by Anthony Scaduto. I recommend that Brogan read Hauptmann's own testimony at his trial. He will find it enlightening.

The rules of evidence propounded by Brogan and Kennedy seem to be that the only admissible testimony should be that of believers in the unblemished innocence of the accused. Let us see how this would work in another well-publicized trial, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were found, when arrested, to be carrying unlicensed handguns, a felony. After being duly warned, they were asked to explain their possession. The explanation they offered was a fabrication so puerile that it could hardly be called "self-serving". All this was admitted by the defence at their trial.

As this would certainly cause even the most simple and most kindly policeman to be suspicious, and therefore prejudiced, are we then to throw out all the evidence gathered by the prejudiced police which connected Sacco and Vanzetti with the murder of paymaster Parmenter and his guard Berardelli? I think not.

I repeat: Mr Brogan's review, and his and Mr Kennedy's letters, are specimens of exculpation; fictions, and not very good fictions at that. Agatha Christie would have done better.

JOHN S. KERABIAN,
Washington Mountain Road, Becket, Massachusetts 01223.

'Smith and the Museum'
Sir, - Clearly, when S. Schoenbaum, in his elegant article on the British Library (August 9), includes me as a denizen of Grub Street he is not referring to the snobbish end inhabited by Samuel Johnson and George Gissing. Does he imply the middle classes of that ambiguous and much maligned area, or, at worst, the slums overrun with hired hacks? Simply to keep the record straight, I have devoted forty years of writing to rejecting the fleshpots offered by popular publishers and strongly resist a Ryle false categorization.

Excluding members of the profession as distinguished as Professor Schoenbaum, it can be argued that academe has its own Grub Street where frustrated lecturers monotonously deliver pre-packaged lectures in return for payment and write papers and books as promotion devices. Every profession has its Grub Street.

VINCENT BROME,
45 Great Ormond Street, London WC1.

Sir, - I greatly enjoyed S. Schoenbaum's generous "Smith and the Museum" (August 9). May I reassure him on one point? He quotes from the description of a manuscript play, presented in 1942, in a "temporary catalogue available only in the Manuscript Room". This manuscript (Additional MS 45865) is now described in the *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum 1936-1945*, published in 1970 (Part I, p 256). The description includes the sentence: "For a descriptive account of the play see S. Schoenbaum, 'Wit's Triumvirate: a Caroline Comedy Recovered', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* (Rice University, Houston, Texas), iv, no. 2, 1964, pp. 227-237."

D. P. WALEY,
Department of Manuscripts, British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1.

'Pound's Artists'

Sir, - Yes, Hilary Gresty (Letters, July 26) is quite right that I ought to know that Gaudier-Brzeska drew Pound in ink and not charcoal (though I don't think that has much to do with Pound's interest in the ideogram, which began rather later, after Gaudier had gone off to the war), and that the Whistler pictures are etchings, not drawings. But whatever the Kettle's Yard catalogue may state, Pound sat for the Wyndham Lewis portrait in the autumn of 1938, not 1939; and he saw Epstein's "Rock-Drill" (in his own words) "back in prehistory", long before the Wyndham Lewis review reminded him of its existence and name. And while we are splitting hairs, I had better point out to Ms Gresty that the editor of Pound's letters spells his name Paige, not Page.

HUMPHREY CARPENTER,
6 Farndon Road, Oxford.

Moholy-Nagy's Modulator

Sir, - In his refreshingly balanced estimation of Moholy-Nagy (July 12), Rudolf Arnheim errs only in describing the famous Light-Space Modulator as "deprived of its motion and light source" and "languish[ing] in a remote corner" of this Museum.

While fervently wishing that this modest building could boast the luxury of remote corners, I am happy to report that Harvard's Center for Conservation and Technical Studies has expertly nursed Moholy's ailing construction back to a state of delicate convalescence, thereby allowing the machine to run periodically for short intervals.

PETER NISBET,
Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University Art Museum, 32 Quincy Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.

Vahé Ohagan's *Khulab*, reviewed by John A. C. Grepplin (July 12), was incorrectly priced. It is available at \$30 from 2419 Lake Street, San Francisco 94121.

In Gerald Mangan's review of *A Twelvemonth and a Day* by Christopher Rush (August 19), the year of the author's birth appeared incorrectly as 1955; Mr Rush was, in fact, born in 1944.

COMMENTARY

Standing up for thisen

Blake Morrison

D. H. LAWRENCE
The Daughter-in-Law
Hampstead Theatre

Little is expected of D. H. Lawrence's plays. They belong to the period before he achieved prominence and are generally ranked below the novels, the stories, the poems, the travel writing, even the critical essays. But Lawrence himself did expect much of them: he declared himself "sick of the rather bony, bloodless drama we get nowadays" and thought it "time for a reaction against Shaw and Galsworthy and Barker and Irishy (except Synge) people". In January 1913 he wrote to Edward Garnett: "I am going to send you a new play I have written. It is neither a comedy nor a tragedy - just ordinary. It is quite objective, as far as that term goes, and though no doubt, like most of my stuff, it wants weeding out a bit, yet I think the whole thing is there, laid out properly, planned and progressive. . . I do think this play might have a chance on the stage. It'll bear cutting, but I don't think it lacks the stuff for the theatre."

That play was *The Daughter-in-Law*, written in Lawrence's *annus mirabilis*, 1912, the year he resigned his teaching post, broke off his engagement, eloped with Frieda and wrote *Sons and Lovers*. Yet the play was not staged until the 1960s - when a much acclaimed production at the Royal Court in 1967 led to a Lawrence "season" the following year - and it still remains less well known than *A Collier's Friday Night* and *The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd*. This very good production should put that right, for though it is an uneven play it deserves an audience for its dialogue alone.

A sense of foreboding

Alastair Goulden

The End of Europe
Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith

Many of our leading writers are well known in Poland, yet perhaps the only contemporary Polish name that is familiar over here is that of Jerzy Grotowski, the greatest contributor to the development and restructuring of modern attitudes to acting and staging techniques. Ironically, Grotowski left Poland for the west coast of America last year, and the demise of his Theatre Laboratory in Wrocław has had its effect on the Polish theatre establishment, providing a convenient signal for a new era in which a "new generation" of directors is emerging. The predominantly visual approach to theatre which resulted from Grotowski's work in the last two decades has prompted a number of artists to turn to the stage as a medium for expression. But whereas in Britain this process has led to a marked increase in "performance art" which is little more than an extension of the living sculpture of the 1970s, the effect in Poland has been the emergence of

The plot is, as Lawrence says, "ordinary". Luther Gascoigne, a miner of thirty, has recently married and moved in with Minnie, an orphaned ex-governess who has some savings, is independent (it is she who has proposed to him, by letter), and comes from or aspires to a slightly higher social station. But it turns out six weeks into the marriage that Luther has also got pregnant young Bertha Purdy, whose mother approaches his mother for £40 compensation. Mrs Gascoigne, who disapproves of her "hoity-toity" daughter-in-law, welcomes the calamity as a chance to take Minnie down a peg or two and to ruin an already rocky marriage. Joe, Luther's brother, schemes to keep Minnie in the dark but before long a drunk Luther comes out with the whole story. Rows follow, and a brief separation. But in the end, after a bitter set-to over Minnie's (squandered) money, there is the promise that the marriage can be put on a new and happier footing.

Lawrence accommodates into the play some of the real social unrest of 1912. Joe and Luther strike with other miners for better pay and conditions, and the climax involves a fight with blacklegs and soldiers. For much of the play, work and being out of work are a mere backdrop to the family tensions, but sometimes the two spheres revealingly intersect. When an aggrieved Minnie goes "on strike" in the home, Joe shows her the meaning of the word "blackleg" by threatening to bring in another woman; Mrs Gascoigne advances her theory that men get hurt down "t'pit" when they want to spite their womenfolk; "standing up for thisen" and "being a man" have a bearing both on domestic life and on the wider social struggle.

It is not an eventful play. There are only two genuinely theatrical moments, the first when

Joe smashes the houseproud Minnie's crockery, the second when Luther bursts in with blood dripping from his forehead (a weird echo of the bloodying of Mrs Morel in *Sons and Lovers*). And though Geoff Rose's set at Hampstead nicely draws out the contrast between the two households (Mrs Gascoigne's unpretentious and functional, Minnie's got up with horse brasses and willow pattern china), Lawrence scarcely exploits the resources of the stage. This allows attention to keep to the dialogue, with its rich and uncompromising use of dialect (*mardy, nowt, prithe, blether, gabby* and many another that escapes transcription), its muted proletarian rumblings against masters and bosses ("it's a wonder they let us live on t'face o' t'earth"), and its gloomy female wisdom: "marriage is like a mousetrap", "a child's a problem and a pleasure; a man's just a problem", "how's a woman to have a husband when the men all belong to their mothers?"

That last question, Minnie's, overpowers the second half of the play, driving out the dramatic possibilities of the pregnancy settlement in favour of a Lawrencean "theme" - the struggle between mothers and young women for a man's soul - and leaving the play looking like a rough sketch for the Paul-Miriam-Mrs Morel triangle in *Sons and Lovers*. But Cheryl Campbell as Minnie and James Hazeldine as Luther make the most of their parts: she strong, taunting, intelligent, lonely, shrewish, ambitious, he easy-going, weak, passive, too easily the martyr - good and bad on both sides. John Dove's direction makes a quietly invaluable contribution to centenary reassessments of Lawrence by reminding us of the early writing, qualities which were largely lost after 1912.

The Cairo game

John Keegan

NICHOLAS WRIGHT
The Desert Air
The Pit, Barbican

The Desert Air is set at the headquarters of the British army, Cairo, in 1942. Its action concerns, however, not the war in the desert but the activities of Special Operations Executive, here disguised as Dangerous Operations Groundforce (DOG). DOG is preoccupied - as SOE indeed was - with the support of the guerrilla war against Hitler in Yugoslavia. Official policy is to back the royalist Cetniks, led by General Mihailovic. Elements in DOG are keen to transfer British backing to his communist rival, Tito, leader of the Partisans. The convoluted plot turns on their mixed motives, which are largely selfish, and the conflicts to which they give rise.

Were *The Desert Air* a mere documentary - and it draws its inspiration from Basil Davidson's memoir of his work for SOE in the Mediterranean, *Special Operations Europe* - its action would be fantastic enough. SOE navigated in deep waters and shipped a crew as diverse as any to be found flying the British flag during the Second World War. But to the documentary ingredients Nicholas Wright has added a mixture of characters even more far-fetched than those who played the Cairo game for real. He has them, moreover, converse in dialogue which at times makes even that of the Evelyn Waugh's *Sword of Honour* trilogy sound flat, and yet succeeds brilliantly in conveying the authentic flavour of British army conversation.

Most of the characters are temporary soldiers or their hangers-on; Captain Woolf, a homosexual intellectual of left-wing inclinations, who sees in Yugoslavia the chance to advance the cause of revolution; Major Crago, an idealist, who longs to be a man of action; Colonel Pagan, a man of the world who hopes to see the war through without suffering any more of the personal disasters which have dogged his life this far. The disaster which most nearly threatens him in Cairo is to lose the affection of his Polish second wife, Mila, whom he has secured employment in DOG headquarters.

The linchpin of the plot, however, is supplied by a regular soldier, Brigadier Gore, who runs the Yugoslav section of DOG. Gore, known as Hippo, is a brilliant and memorable theatrical creation, both the justification of the play and one of the most convincing military types to be brought to the modern English stage. He obsesses his fellow characters. Moreover he rivets the attention of the audience. Geoffrey Hutchings, who plays him, succeeds in being the star of a strong and well-chosen cast without detracting from the performances of the other actors.

Gore is a type - there are more of them in the army than people like to think - a ranker's son who has won a commission and promotion by guile and cynical deceit. He detests the class he has joined and plays the army's game, at which he is very good, largely for the inner satisfaction of having his secret revenge on it. DOG, Tito and Mihailovic are of equal unimportance to him. What concerns him in 1942 is to find the next rung on the ladder which will carry him from brigadier to major-general. To that end he bribes and blackmails all about him, notably Pagan, whom he forces to write the false report which he calculates will lead to his promotion by threatening to part him from the beautiful Mila (delightfully played by Cecile Paoli). Ultimately, however, the worst in Hippo's character gets the better of his judgment and leads to his downfall, although it is left open whether he is a victim of his own character or of the class war. Generalship escapes him in life, though apparently not quite in death. *The Desert Air* is a brilliant, immensely enjoyable satire which deserves a long run and a wide audience.

The text of *The Desert Air* (Methuen, £2.25, 0 413 59880 2) will be published on October 10.

The science of the passions

David Walker

Tribute to Wilkie
National Gallery of Scotland, until October 13

This exhibition of the work of Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), the Fife country clergyman's son who went to the Royal Academy Schools in London without connections of any kind, became a full Academician at the age of twenty-six and achieved European celebrity well before he was forty, aims to gain, or rather revive, a wider appreciation of the far-reaching influence which Wilkie's innovations, both in subject and in his manner of painting, had on British nineteenth-century art. It was an influence which, as Lindsay Errington's catalogue essays show, penetrated right through Europe as far as Russia. Although Dr Waagen found in him "a close affinity with his celebrated countryman Sir Walter Scott . . . both have in common that genuinely refined delineation of character which extends to the minutest particulars", and although he commanded the attention in France of painters such as Géricault and Delacroix as no previous British artist had ever done, his subsequent reputation has not remained abreast of that of his contemporaries Constable and Turner. It is a circumstance which would seem to arise from a number of factors, of which the Scottishness of the subjects of his earlier pictures may even be one: his painstakingly studied methods of picture-making precluded his being prolific; some of his best work was from the beginning scattered throughout Europe and the original paintings, as opposed to the engravings, have long been underexposed. Perhaps even more significantly, since he did not in his earlier years paint on a large scale, and worked in a low-keyed brown tonality, the sheer quality of his work is not so immediately perceived in the flood of larger and showier narrative genre painting which it inspired. It threatened to engulf his reputation well within his own lifetime, and it was this, perhaps even more than his Continental tour of 1825-8, which drove him to paint the huge, and even more undervalued, history pictures of his later years.

Wilkie did not, of course, originate British genre painting, although he would seem initially to have arrived at it fairly independently of precedent from direct observation. At that distance in time it is difficult to say to what extent as a teenager at the Edinburgh Trustees' Academy he may have been aware of Hogarth, Morland and Wheatley, although there must have been a few engravings and mezzotints about; or had he, perhaps, seen in Fife country houses a few of the Dutch genre pictures of a century and more earlier to which his own work was more closely related? All that can be said is that by 1804 he had painted a self-portrait worthy of Raeburn himself and his "Pittessie Fair", which the exhibition takes as its starting point in the section "Folklore and the Vernacular Tradition". More like a picture of the Brueghel school than a late Georgian one in its crowded groups of fairly even-sized figures, comprising in all some 140 vividly characterized and animated individual portraits, it was perhaps, as Dr Errington suggests, a conscious documenting of the people and the improving conditions in the parish, as described by his father in the *Old Statistical Account*. This is witnessed in its depiction of the small black cattle of early Aberdeen-Angus history, of beautifully painted utensils, the forerunner of many such incidentals to come, and of the changeover from tumbledown thatch with bingling chimneys to neat pantiled roofs: only the somewhat contrived chiaroscuro reflects conventional academic teaching.

"The Penny Wedding" of 1818 looks farther back to his earlier boyhood, to the uncalled thatch roofs which were falling into ruin by the time of his Pittessie picture and to the scenes celebrated by Burns, but, despite the far superior management of light and shadow, rich translucent colour and pearly flesh tones, the figures are less directly observed and one is very conscious, perhaps as one is meant to be, that it is a nostalgic remembrance of time past rather than present. Alexander Carr's version of the same subject is an interesting contrast,

coarse but drawn from reality rather than memory. In the "Death of the Red Deer", 1821, Wilkie records a world where the old traditions had not merely been preserved but revived and formalized half a century after their proscription on the Duke of Atholl's estate. Figures and characterization are directly observed, but Wilkie's delicate sketch is made to seem tentative alongside the paintings of Landseer, who followed his path there in 1824 and whose "John Crerar with his Pony" presents as strong a challenge to Wilkie in sheer quality as any other picture in the exhibition. In this section, John Phillip's "Scotch Fair" of 1848 shows in its bold r and more varied figure groupings, larger scale (deriving ultimately from Wilkie's "Chelsea Pensioners" and higher-keyed, open-air colour how much genre painting had developed in the forty-four years since "Pittessie Fair", but one has to search in the secondary figure groups before one finds anything of Wilkie's vivid portraiture. There is a lot more life, if much less skill, in the horse and cattle painter James Howe's excited mélange of horses, livestock and grinning turnip-faced people at "Skirling Fair", as personal a view as Wilkie's had been a quarter of a century earlier.

It is in the sections "Character and Narrative" and "Modern Life" that the revolution Wilkie wrought on nineteenth-century art is most apparent. The rustics of Morland's genre paintings had been only agreeable pastoral figures, Stubbs's more purposeful reapers and haymakers seem distant, or look at one with an expression of detachment, and even the eighteenth-century caricaturists were limited in their repertoire of facial expression. When Wilkie arrived in London in 1805, Teniers, Ostade and later Rembrandt came to his notice but in "The Village Politicians", which made him famous in a day at the Academy of 1806, he sought something more than was to be found in Dutch genre, which as his engraver John Burnet put it, "seldom embrace the varieties of action or expression but are confined to brawls, merry-making, figures smoking, or playing games of tric-trac". Perhaps only a lowland Scot, fresh from the cottars' and weavers' houses of his school friends, could have conceived anything so aggressively argumentative in the sombre and low-toned setting characteristic of Wilkie's earlier subject pictures: the Scots weavers and tradespeople generally were a radical disputatious lot and political discussions little different from Wilkie's were still to be seen in scarcely changed settings until just after the Second World War. But while primarily due to Wilkie's acute powers of observation - Sir George Beaumont noticed that the rather odd red-haired country boy became as well bred as any man in England in the course of one dinner - this kind of character study was not easily achieved before photography could catch the fleeting expression. Dr Errington shows that, however natural the politicians' expressions and gestures might seem, they were scientifically based on the researches of another London Scot, Sir Charles Bell, a specialist in the functions of the sensory and motor nerves who had studied the works of Descartes, Lavater and Lebrun on the expression of the passions.

In the exhibition one can see the "group psychology" of the politicians and background drovers, develop rapidly through the more self-consciously studied exposition of expression in the muscles of the face in "Rent Day" (illustrated but, alas, not exhibited), the moving "Blind Fiddler" of 1806 and later the equally sombre but more dramatically tragic "Distraint for Rent" of 1815, to the extraordinary sensitivity to nuances of expression we see in "The Letter of Introduction", which takes the subject picture forward to the best that Orchardson could do half a century later. Even today it is hard to credit that it could have been painted as early as 1813. Though at first sight not so obviously modern in its Dutch-inspired, late Georgian atmosphere of tall slim trees and Thomas Malton-like architecture, Wilkie's masterpiece, "The Chelsea Pensioners", 1816-22, brought from Apsley House, is a revelation. Significantly larger than his earlier pictures, it has a deeper perspective of figure groups and a greater range of facial types



David Wilkie, "The Letter of Introduction", 1813, from the exhibition reviewed here.

and expressions, from the soldier who strains to hear the news from the open window to the shock of the young mother whose eyes scan the list of the dead. The fresh delicacy of the painting and the extraordinary virtuosity of the drawing, especially the army officer holding his child aloft, are as real and thrilling to us now as they were to Géricault then.

The response to Wilkie's new genre was immediate. Turner would have been seen to come near to matching him in it had the Tate allowed his "Village Blacksmith" of 1807 to come to the exhibition rather than the unfinished "Cobbler's Home". Edward Bird's "Country Choristers" also has quality in some of the figures, though it is a little hard to see now why it should have scared Wilkie out of the Academy of 1810, while W. H. Lizars's mildly caricatured version of Wilkie's theme of "Reading the Will", 1811, demonstrates the full range of Bell's science of the passions with panache if not subtlety. Mulready, closer to Wilkie in his London years, comes very near to matching his qualities in "The Widow", 1823. More instructive still, perhaps, are the direct comparisons this exhibition affords with mid-Victorian genre. Tom Faed's "Forgiveness", 1874, is a clever piece of story-telling, surely founded on something witnessed, from a painter whose real qualities are too often clouded by a desire to move us to tears. F. P. Stephanoff's "Answering an Advertisement", 1851, a humorous variant of Wilkie's "Letter", runs it fairly close in painterly quality, but a more photographic polish is seen to pervade Richard Redgrave's "Fashionable Slaves", 1847, and W. P. Frith's "The Railway Station", 1862. James Campbell's "Waiting for Legal Advice" of 1857, with its big-scaled figures and clever whispered background conversation, and R. B. Martineau's fashionable genre piece "Last Day in the Old Home" of 1862, with its strong Holman Hunt-like colour, both stand out from their neighbours as having something individual beyond Wilkie's influence to express.

Martineau's picture, like James Collinson's early "Answering the Emigrant's Letter", provides a neat lead into the section "Religion, History and Travel", in which Errington establishes interesting links between Wilkie's method of

finishing as he went on a white canvas, which is seen in the very freshly painted figures of the unfinished "Knox Preaching", with that of Holman Hunt and other Pre-Raphaelites. Wilkie's pictures of Knox set in train a whole school of Scottish Reformation art represented by William Dyce's mysteriously similar and apparently concurrent version of "Knox Preaching", and James Drummond's and Fettes Douglas's versions of the Reformer Wishart. Wilkie's huge later pictures of more recent history are represented only by superb drawings for his majestic "Sir David Baird discovering the Body of Tipu Sultan" and another for his black fortune teller in "Josephine and the Fortune Teller"; modern history did not thereafter attract the same following, although the Napoleonic era was later to evoke a response in Orchardson. There is a magic in the tantalizing sketches from Wilkie's fateful trip to the East, in the slave in the "Hippopotamus Mirza", in the "Negro Nurse", and in "The Turkish Letter Writer".

The exhibition proves all it set out to prove and more. Wilkie is seen to have remained the supreme master of the genre he created. Even if one looks beyond the exhibition and peruses as many paintings of the late Georgian and Victorian scene as one can lay one's hand and eye to, the impression made by the exhibition remains unchanged. His influence can be followed out into all manner of incidentals: his observation of the personality of dogs was as new and as carefully studied as was that of humans; the oriental vase in "The Letter" is the antecedent of Orchardson's brilliant painting of such decorative accessories, and the still life in the foreground of "The Blind Fiddler" that of the large Glasgow School paintings of seventy years later. Will Wilkie's reputation continue to remain enhanced once "The Pensioners" is back to its place high on the walls of Apsley House and memory of the exhibition fades? We have lately seen that it is still possible to write a book on Frith without mentioning him. This exhibition must surely have some effect but until his work is seen more, until Dr Errington matches Eitner's book on Géricault with one on Wilkie, the answer seems likely to remain in the negative.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 240

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than September 20. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 240" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX.

1 Ralph was an Eton boy, and hence, being robust, a swimmer and a cricketer. A swimmer and a cricketer is nowhere to be scorned in youth's republic.

2 She was fond of all boys' plays, and greatly preferred cricket not merely to dolls, but to the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing, a dormouse, feeding a canary-bird or watering a rose-bush.

3 "And your Aunt Elizabeth, in a college gown wearing large cricket pads - Newham is it? Became a doctor did she? I never knew Mrs Robinson had been a doctor; why did she give it up? She left six forpence in? But that's nothing, surely. Oh, all in the same world? Yes I suppose that would

be rather many. And three swags? Well, I dare say her mind was on cricket."

Competition No 236

Winner: MacDonald Jackson

Answers:

1 Whosoever is harmoniously composed delights in harmony; which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church music.

Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, second part, section 9.

2 There let the pealing organ blow, To the full, valed choir below, In service high, and anthems clear, As may with sweetness, through my ear, Dissolve me into ecstasies; And bring all Heav'n before my eyes.

John Milton, "Il Penseroso".

3 There's a certain Slant of light, Winter Afternoons - That oppresses like the Heft Of Cathedral Tunes -

Emily Dickinson, "There's a certain Slant of light".

Extremely erogenous

Roger Cardinal

PETER WEBB and ROBERT SHORT
Hans Bellmer
300pp. Quartet. £40.
07043 24377

Hans Bellmer is not an artist to recommend idly. His erotic imagery is invariably scandalous, frequently obscene if not downright repugnant. At times he portrays the sexual organs with morbid verismo; there are scenes of ordeal and exorbitant debauchery which test the viewer's squeamishness. None the less, he often achieves an eerie fluency and momentum which thrust the eye across literalism and into a dimension of poetic response.

"Désabillage" (1968) is an ink drawing of a girl exposing herself. But instead of a dress, the girl is actually pulling her own body open: her torso is represented as a swollen vulva drawn apart to disclose a massive phallus whose scrotal base follows the outline of the girl's splayed hips. Hidden within her upper body, the glans strains up to her ardent face with its closed eyes and outstretched tongue. Such a conflation may seem monstrous, hair-raisingly extremist, yet there is little doubt of its power to arrest the eye and freeze rationally, if only momentarily. In such a moment, before rejecting the image as pornographic, a sick defilement of the feminine, the viewer may glimpse a more austere perspective in which the erotic is envisaged, in Georges Bataille's words, "gravely, tragically".

Given the cloud of ignorance and prejudice which inhibits our Anglo-Saxon view of Bellmer, Peter Webb's buoyant and informative study, the first monograph in English, is welcome. It makes available enough biographical, critical and visual material to facilitate a thorough appraisal of the artist's contribution to Surrealism and to modern culture at large. Drawing on the artist's essays and letters, and on interviews with his family and friends, Webb sets out the detail of Bellmer's life: his

early years as a graphic designer in Berlin; his grieving flight from Nazi Germany in 1938 after the death of his first wife; his reception by the Paris Surrealists; his wartime internment by the French military; his short-lived second marriage that produced twin daughters; and the dark last years he spent with the artist Unica Zürn, each worshipping yet tyrannizing the other — Unica killed herself in front of Bellmer in 1970, and he lived on through five years of senile loneliness.

Webb also plots the evolution of Bellmer's obsessions, not least with the notorious doll which he made and photographed in a variety of poses. The cycle *Die Puppe* (1934) is a disquieting blend of the perverse and the infantile, for the dismembered doll can be seen both as the victim of sadistic crime and as an emblem of the artist's regression to that most innocent (?) of fetishes, the nursery toy. Webb leafs attentively through some splendidly intense drawings and etchings. His commentary is basically art-historical, with insights into Bellmer's antecedents illustrated by such items as medical engravings and fantasy images by Arcimboldo or Fuseli. But whereas there is much verbal paraphrase of the subject-matter, there is less in the way of speculation on the latent meaning of the pictures. It is also a pity that Webb should make little attempt to define the qualities of Bellmer's sinuous and probing graphic style, since this would surely have enhanced his case for an appreciation of the work that transcends its overt themes.

In a more theoretical chapter, Robert Short offers a fine exegesis of Bellmer's dense text *L'Anatomie de l'image* (1957). Bellmer's project can suddenly make sense in the light of his notion of a "physical unconscious" distinct from the psychic one and constituted in bizarre yet compelling impulses that trigger sexual contact between different parts of the body. Remembering the interchangeable components of his doll, Bellmer dreams of the migration of erogenous zones across the anatomy, and ends up seeing the body as a sentence full

of cross-references and internal rhymes. This model underlies his typical amalgamations of mouths, feet, breasts, buttocks and genitals. In implicit echo of Freudian dream-theory, Short observes: "The body becomes a language system replete with metaphors and metonymies, condensations and displacements, multiplications and subtractions, puns and practical jokes."

All in all, this painstaking survey succeeds in bringing out the formidable coherence that informs Bellmer's extravagant and aberrant vision. Of course perversion and violence persist as issues. Are we meant to sympathize with the artist's sado-masochism? How literally did he subscribe to the Sadean ethos? What can be redeeming about sexually explicit works shaped in what Webb calls "the cold ecstasy of evil"? Webb's Bellmer is essentially a painterly counterpart to Bataille, whose ritualistic insistence on the scatological, the bestial, the filthy, is presented as a striving "towards a locus of the sacred in which Eros and Thanatos are seated side by side".

Knowledge of Bellmer's erotic ideas prompts one to see "Désabillage" as the climax of a compulsive enquiry into the relation of male to female desire. The metamorphic image of woman-as-phallus (or phallus-as-woman) might be read as translating a dictum from one of Jôe Bousquet's letters to the artist: "Rather than penetrate woman, man seeks to penetrate the dream she has of being man." This lasciviously gorgeous Androgyne subsumes contraries in a liberating spasm, Bellmer's impassioned yet precise marks invoking a principle of transgression, at once mutilating the literal body and articulating a figure of ecstasy on the far side of repression. The girl in the drawing is set against a background of a cellar with stairs leading steeply up to a half-open door. Symbolically, Bellmer has staged his sexual paradox down in the unconscious, a realm of unconstrained libidinal fusion. And for a moment here, even attraction and repulsion are one, convulsively entwined.

Birds, bees and Bauhaus

John Gage

RICHARD VERDI
Klee and Nature
258pp, with 212 illustrations. Zwemmer. £25 (paperback, £15).
0302027475

Paul Klee is one of the first of the modern masters to have emerged from the glare of adulation into the twilight of critical analysis; appropriately so, for he was perhaps the most thoroughly self-conscious of twentieth-century painters, and he left a quantity of expository and didactic writing to amplify an extensive oeuvre. This self-commentary was, however, very little concerned with "subject", and it has been left for scholars like Richard Verdi to explore the implications of Klee's extraordinarily wide-ranging interests, as they emerge from his imagery and his titles. Verdi has one foot firmly in the hagiographical tradition; he interprets the work very much in the artist's own terms; he does not spare even the juvenilia — and with Klee this means drawings done in infancy — his solemn appraisal, nor does he question the artist's meditations on his own divinity. But his book is essentially an exploration of what Verdi calls "the mind of the scientist and the heart of the poet"; it examines Klee's abundant and lifelong attachment to natural history in chapters on the animal and plant worlds, and on their interface where, like some latter-day Linnaeus or Erasmus Darwin, Klee empathized with the animal, and indeed human characters of plants. From the terrestrial Verdi moves to the cosmic, and he concludes with a disappointing chapter on Klee's belief that the artist's creativity should be a "natural" process. These chapters, although they by no means exhaust the painter's interests in nature, offer a useful and fascinating gathering of scattered materials, but they treat too many examples too briefly, and they soon begin to read like lists.

In a postscript Verdi points to what is surely one of the key questions in the book: Klee's relationship to a particularly German tradition of attitudes towards nature, which he locates chiefly with Goethe in the eighteenth century and with Hermann Hesse in the painter's own day. He suggests that Klee arrived at his own idiosyncratic view of nature quite independently, but this has still to be established, and on the face of it, it does seem rather implausible. Several years ago, for example, Marianne Teuber noted some similarities between Klee's holistic notions of growth and the vitalism of the distinguished embryologist Hans Driesch, who was closely associated with the Weimar Bauhaus, where Klee taught from 1921. Driesch's teacher, Ernst Haeckel, was, as Verdi shows, read and used by the artist, but Driesch himself is not mentioned in the book. Verdi seems inclined to accept "nature" as an unproblematic given, and the reader is never quite certain what he is expected to learn from Klee's "poetic" evocation of it. Verdi is similarly unclear on the relationship between nature and art in Klee's thought and practice.

"Nature is garrulous to the point of confusion; let the artist be truly taciturn", he quotes from the painter's diary of 1909. This would lead us to expect a radically reduced, diagrammatic approach to representation, which, in due course, is precisely what we get. "Time of the Plants" of 1927, for example, embodies an anthology of growth-patterns as Klee had expounded them in his Bauhaus lectures: he is concerned with the graphic rendering of biological time. This graphic emphasis is central to Klee's work; and if we may believe the account of one of his pupils that the titles, apt and witty as they are, only emerged at the end of the creative process, the whole relationship between "subject" and image must remain curiously problematic. And if Klee's objective was, as he said in a famous statement, not to render the visible but to make visible, we need to know a good deal more about the conventions of visualization on which he drew, and which were offered to him in textbooks of natural history, only a few of which Verdi has chosen to mention in this handsome, stimulating, but essentially uncritical study.

Unsettling consensus

L. Jonathan Cohen

CHRISTOPHER HOOKWAY

Peirce
301pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £25.
0710097158
CHARLES S. PEIRCE
Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A chronological edition
Volume 2: 1867-1871
Edited by Edward C. Moore
649pp. Indiana University Press. \$35.
025337202X

Great philosophers shine like diamonds. As their thoughts are examined in the light of critical scrutiny, now this facet, now that, reveals a dazzling insight, or hints at a provoking flaw, while at the same time a pervasive solidity of construction leaves no doubt that a system of ideas has been established which will outlast most of its contemporaries. Perhaps C. S. Peirce was a rougher diamond than some, because his views developed over a fairly long period and much of his writing that survives was never polished up at all for publication. But he continues to excite widespread interest and his philosophical writings still present a substantial challenge to historical scholarship.

Though Continental thinkers today tend mostly to concentrate their attention on Peirce's contribution to semiotics, it is his idealist — now called "anti-realist" — theory of truth that currently attracts discussion in Britain. Some British philosophers have argued at length about what a modern anti-realist could or could not say, while remaining reluctant to label themselves with whole-hearted commitment to so paradoxical a doctrine. One might almost wonder at times whether the issue was still a serious one — so determinedly hypothetical has been its prevailing mode of discussion. But in Peirce we can all discern not only a committed anti-realist but also an anti-realist with an almost up-to-date awareness of fundamental issues in logic and science and with a systematically developed position that is consistently open to critical examination.

The actual sequence of chronological development in Peirce's philosophical thinking was somewhat obscured in the selective eight-volume edition of his works published by Harshorne, Weiss and Burks under the title of *Collected Papers*. But it is beginning to emerge quite clearly in the *Writings* — under the general editorship of Edward C. Moore — that has now reached its second volume. And a considerable merit in Christopher Hookway's useful new exposition of Peirce's philosophy is that he does not burke the issue of changes or developments in Peirce's thinking on certain subjects (as did W. B. Gallie's *Peirce and Pragmatism*, for example, and H. Wennerberg's *The Pragmatism of C. S. Peirce*).

Thus in 1870, as Hookway points out, Peirce was expressing sympathy with the view that "there is a general drift in the history of human thought which will lead it to one general argument, one catholic consent". Moreover "any truth more perfect than this desired conclusion, any reality more absolute than what is thought in it, is a fiction of metaphysics". Peirce's bold claim was, accordingly, that there is a definite opinion on which different enquirers are bound to converge if only they enquire long enough. So "it is a consensus or common profession which constitutes reality. And if a general belief, which is perfectly stable and immovable, can in any way be produced, though it be by the faggot and the rack, to talk of any error in such belief is utterly absurd."

Yet at the same time Peirce was insisting that psychological considerations are irrelevant to logical validity. He strongly criticized James and John Stuart Mill for not seeing this. Information about how an inference arises in the mind or about how an argument was produced has no bearing, he insisted, on the question whether the inference or argument is correct one. So there was a certain incoherence between his opposition to psychologism in the theory of logic and his claim that the standard of truth in matters of fact is set by the universal convergence of minds. Even if "under sufficiently favourable circumstances" (as Peirce puts it) everyone will eventually agree that the mean distance of the earth from the sun is so-and-so many miles, how can we be

sure now that this agreement will not be just the result of some distortion or illusion from which everyone at that date will be suffering? Whether it be due to the operation of Descartes' malign demon or to the death-bed contrivance of Unger's malicious scientist, universal error remains a logical possibility that stands in the way of identifying truth with the settled consensus of finite minds. It is not the bare fact of consensus that should count here, but its legitimacy.

Of course, Peirce's theism may have shielded the problem from him for a while. Just as Berkeley's epistemologically benevolent Deity created no unperceivable particles in Nature, so Peirce's might be presumed to have created no unknowable truths about Nature. And in a providentially ordered world the settled consensus of all finite minds can hardly be in error. But Peirce was too good a philosopher ever to have rested content with resolving a crucial issue by the introduction, as it were, of a *deus ex machina*. What he came to maintain instead was a doctrine of reliance on the rationally defensible virtues of scientific method.

While still insisting that the sole object of enquiry is the settlement of belief, Peirce argued that only the method of science can be self-consciously adopted as a method for this settlement of belief. And that is because in his view a scientist's ultimate aim is to promote discovery of the truth, not to make money or to benefit humanity. Of course this pursuit and final capture of the truth may be the work of indefinitely many generations. So, while an engineer may convert a current scientific result into a belief and exploit its applications, the scientist looks on it simply as "the formula reached in the existing state of scientific progress". The scientist regards himself as inherently fallible. He is not in the least wedded to his conclusions and "stands ready to abandon one or all as soon as experience opposes them". Hence Peirce's fallibilism, as he called it, allows us to attribute permanent value to the effort of an individual scientist only as a part of the larger ongoing process of human enquiry. We may well have already reached the final opinion on very many matters, but we cannot know which of our opinions are thus conclusive.

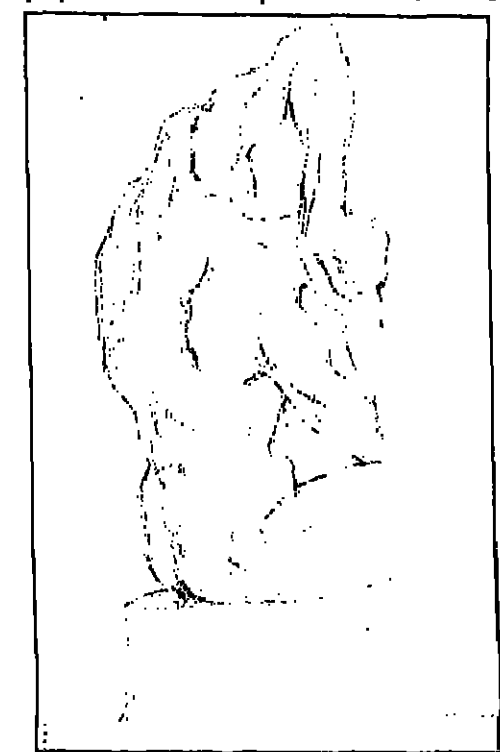
In the long run, moreover, according to Peirce, science has procedures that guarantee success. There are "abductive" procedures, as he calls them, for selecting the hypotheses to be tested in relation to a particular problem, and inductive procedures for executing such tests and evaluating their results. Admittedly no rules can be given for thinking up appropriate hypotheses in the first place, but Peirce seems to think that good scientists have an instinctive knack for doing this which may have an evolutionary explanation.

One can easily see that Peirce's pragmatist analysis of meaning was crucial to his theory of truth as scientifically settled consensus. "The whole meaning of an intellectual predicate", he wrote, "is that certain kinds of events would happen, once in so often, in the course of experience, under certain kinds of existential conditions." That is what he called the "kernel of pragmatism". And on that assumption it is not unreasonable to suppose, as Peirce did, that there is nothing that can be meaningfully asserted about nature which may not eventually become, via the process of scientific enquiry, a topic of settled belief. But if instead it were possible to talk meaningfully of a reality behind the scenes — if, for example, the reality of subatomic particles were held not to be exhausted by the observable dispositions of cyclotrons and other experimental apparatus to register certain observable effects when certain levers or switches are pulled — the prospects of an eventual settlement of belief might be considerably poorer. Different theories about the unobservable might generate similar predictions about the observable; and, even if some consensus were eventually achieved about the course of observable events (because, after a while, nothing surprising ever seemed to happen any longer), there would be no reason why this should provoke any relaxation in disputes about the unobservable. So even in the very longest of long runs no settled scientific consensus about the unobservable could be guaranteed by scientific method, and therefore

truth about the unobservable could not be identified with such a consensus.

In short, Peirce's theory of truth requires a pragmatist analysis of meaning. But what a poverty-stricken, anthropocentric account of descriptive meaning we are given by pragmatism, empiricism, verificationism, operationalism, and suchlike anti-realist doctrines! What is wrong with all of them is that they ignore the rich variety of ways in which new meanings can be developed through analogies with old ones.

According to the arch-verificationist Schlick "whenever we ask about a sentence 'What does it mean?' we want a description of the conditions under which the sentence will form a true proposition and of those which will make it false." And in support of his thesis he pointed out that this was how Einstein had thought it proper to answer the question "What do we



One of several studies, drawn about 1880, of "L'Ecorché" (the flayed man), a small plaster cast owned by Cézanne and made after a sculpture formerly attributed to Michelangelo; reproduced from A Cézanne Notebook: Figures, portraits, landscapes and still lifes by Paul Cézanne (136pp, with 102 illustrations. New York: Dover; distributed in the UK by Constable. Paperback, £5.95, 0 486 247902).

mean when we speak of two events at distant places happening simultaneously?" No doubt. But Einstein's question about "simultaneity" is not the only kind of semantic issue that arises in natural science. Another is how to define the names of newly postulated submicroscopic entities, or unobservable structures, in analogical terms. Certain kinds of physical particles, for example, may be thought of as resembling more familiar, middle-sized objects in having parameters of mass, spin, charge, velocity and so on, but as differing from them by not having parameters of colour, temperature, etc. Indeed this kind of semantic manoeuvre is familiar also in every religion where gods, angels and devils are conceived to resemble humans in having a personality, but to differ from them in extent of knowledge, power, survival and so on. Moreover the recent work of experimental psychologists like L. R. Brooks and E. Rosch has produced a great deal of evidence that a mechanism for learning meanings by analogy is already operative in human childhood. People can learn to name even everyday kinds of objects correctly by drawing analogies with previously observed instances or with mentally constructed prototypes.

If Peirce had paid serious attention to the explicit or implicit operation of analogical reasoning in our thought about descriptive meanings, he could hardly have maintained his pragmatist semantics. But in fact, despite the high proportion of his writings that are occupied with problems about signs, symbolism and language, he does not seem to have noticed the full potential of semantic analogy.

To this accusation some anti-realists may object that when adults develop new meanings by analogy with old ones, the new meanings are just metaphors and that Peirce several times put on record his appreciation of the importance of metaphor. But no such objection can stand. Terms like "proton" or "elec-

tromagnetic radiation" function literally, not metaphorically, in the language of science. No doubt any genuinely metaphorical use of a word exploits some analogy between what it ordinarily denotes and what it is used to denote. But we certainly cannot infer from this that, conversely, every semantical exploitation of analogy generates a metaphor.

What follows for Peirce's theory of truth? Deprived of support by a pragmatist analysis of meaning, it cannot go through. Instead some sense must be given to speaking about the truth of beliefs that, because the constraints of observational evidence operate too remotely and indirectly upon them, may never be universally shared. So the truth that science seeks cannot be identified with settled consensus.

Those who reject Peirce's theory of truth may be tempted to fall back on some form of the so-called "redundancy" theory whereby assertions that it is true that *p* are reckoned equivalent to assertions that *p*. But the trouble with this equivalence is not that it is false. Who would deny it? The trouble is rather that from an epistemological point of view it is too uninformative. At least Peirce's theory advanced a thesis about the nature of the connection between truth and belief. So too does a contemporary anti-realist, with his doctrine that truth is warranted assertibility, since, once we discount semantically irrelevant conditions of assertibility (such as those involving considerations of ethics or politeness), we soon arrive at a notion of assertibility whereby a person is warranted in asserting that *p* if and only if he or she is warranted in believing that *p*. A realist who wants to compete in the same league has therefore to advance a different thesis about the same problem. He has to offer his own clarification of the connection between truth and belief.

Nor is it difficult to see what this should be. To the anti-realist's claim that truth is warranted belief, the realist need raise no objection if it is allowed that for certain kinds of belief reasons may exist of which no one is directly aware. The best possible reason for believing that there is a polar bear at the North Pole now, or a measles virus in my bloodstream, is just that there is a polar bear at the North Pole now, or a measles virus in my bloodstream, respectively.

So here too the realist exploits the potential of analogical reasoning, since a reason of which we are unaware need not differ essentially from a reason of which we are aware. A pragmatist or verificationist, who has no place in his philosophy for meaning by analogy, will also have no place for reasons of which no one can ever be directly aware. But it is to the existence of just such reasons that the epistemological realist is committed.

The realist can therefore insist that on some issues we may never be aware of the best reason for adopting what is in fact the correct belief. He can thus at least raise the question whether we are indeed entitled to expect that some scientifically settled consensus will converge on the truth, given that the reasons we pick and choose among may be the best ones. But the Peircean anti-realist pre-empt the raising of this issue because he takes such convergence to be an *a priori* philosophical truth. He assumes that scientific method, as Peirce describes it, is sufficient to guarantee the convergence: the principles of scientific method need no improvement for the purpose. So though the Peircean is a fallibilist in relation to science itself, he is an infallibilist in relation to methodology. He leaves no room for himself to be mistaken in thinking that scientific method as practised at present is an effective procedure for eventually discovering the truth. And that seems curiously complacent and unimaginative when one thinks of the relatively short life of science so far, and the considerable number of methodological errors that have been made in the past and are now recognized as such. How can we be so sure that today's method is an effective discovery procedure? Peirce said that any epistemological theory that tended to block the path of enquiry is much at fault; but his own theory of truth, supported by his pragmatist failure to appreciate the role of analogy in our thought about meanings, tends to block the path of enquiry into the improvement of scientific method.

Naked disagreements

Lucey Ellmann

EDWIN MULLINS
The Painted Witch: Female body: male art
230pp. Seeker and Warburg. £15.
043629513X
SARAH KENT and JACQUELINE MORREAU
Women's Images of Men
199pp. Writers and Readers. £12.95.
0863160840

Disturbed some years ago by Germaine Greer's statement in *The Female Eunuch* that "Women have very little idea of how much men hate them", Edwin Mullins has sought to verify it in the work of Western European painters, from Hieronymus Bosch, Titian and Ingres to, more predictably, Munch and Picasso. In *The Painted Witch* he contends that the artists who show least hatred towards women derive their forbearance from personal hardships which have lessened their sense of their own power and privilege: Rembrandt went bankrupt, Goya deaf, Watteau had a terminal illness, and Toulouse-Lautrec was physically deformed. Thus, Mullins's spirited and casual tone enables him to fling a few frivolous theories here and there.

Unexpected digressions and confidences make his book a personalized exposé of the fears of female sexuality expressed by male painters for the benefit of their patrons: we are made aware of Mullins's familiarity with Trafalgar Square, the age of his hymn-singing daughter, and the paintings which have haunted him. His contempt for misogyny is repeatedly emphasized, yet moral indignation on women's behalf occasionally clouds his art-historical judgment. He is affronted by Rubens's transformation of the rape of the Sabine women into an undulating mould of acquisition and acquiescence. Mullins upbraids him for enjoying "what only an unfeel-

ing man could allow himself to enjoy". But Rubens is eliding the story's unfortunate beginning with its happy ending: the compliant behaviour of the women foreshadows the compromise they will later arrange between the Roman and Sabine men in order to avoid bloodshed. The painting merely shows Rome being built in a day.

Yet the submissive Sabine womenfolk fit well into the tradition of female ineffectuality which Mullins surveys. Mary may weep for Christ but she is resigned to her intensely passive role. With equally little to say for themselves, Bathsheba is groomed for adultery, the Three Graces coyly vie for attention, and Venuses shuffle between shells and chaise-longues. The absence of pubic hair, interpreted by Mullins as an effort to tame female animality, also reduces their claims to adulthood and reality. These women are presented free of earthly complications, as if absolved of Original Sin.

Women in art who take decisive action are almost inevitably threatening, and their effects horrific. The beauty and chastity of Judith or Diana appear to exacerbate rather than soften their crimes. When the artist requires a *femine fatale* it seems that any woman will do. The purely political motives for Charlotte Corday's assassination of Marat hold no interest for Munch, who quite erroneously shows her standing naked over the naked and prostrate Marat. While Munch's retrospective striptease proposes sex as the cause of Marat's downfall, it confers no cosy equality on the pair; a naked man appears vulnerable, a naked woman wicked.

"Men's bodies have never stood simply for sex", explains Rozsika Parker in *Women's Images of Men*, a collection of essays and interviews, of warring quality, concerning a large feminist exhibition held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London in 1980. Although the show of course troubled critics with its "penises for penises" sake, Sarah Kent's chapter on the erotic male nude proves how hard it is to make a sex object out of the male body. Depictions of men by women are considered

blasphemous, probably even by the artists themselves. Kent examines flexed thighs from Caravaggio to the soft-porn photography of Robert Mapplethorpe, but her selection of eroticism by women is drained of any *frisson* — there are too few erections and too many other points being made. Bondage and amputation subdue the figure while unfairly alluding to his hang-ups at the same time. Kent's self-indulgent style of assessing erotic potential in the work of other artists disintegrates before her own semi-sexy photographs of male genitals. She remarks with a curious objectivity that here "One senses the mutual respect and co-operation between subject and photographer". There is little left for her to say, except to conclude that "exploration of women's erotic fantasies is . . . in its infancy".

Art's political as well as its libidinal responsibilities are still a subject of debate among these artists. Joyce Agee admits only that "my feminism and my photographs are linked", while Gertrude Elias argues that art should be propagandist, that "Unless it has a message, it is unimportant." Susan Hiller's position seems more open-minded, though also a little open to interpretation: "So you think it would be feasible . . . to be a feminist and yet be an abstract painter?" Sarah Kent enquires dubiously, "Sure," says Hiller, "just as it would be feasible to be a Tory and a performance artist."

Sonia Knox laments the onset of menstruation, a "painful lurch into womanhood", which she re-enacts symbolically by walking through some barbed wire, while others are equally pained by any efforts to alleviate its effects with Tampons or aspirin. Elias herself "confronted the forcible eradication of women's biology from culture" by a Yale bout of menstruating in the Slade School of Art. But there seems some reluctance to lurch into womanhood in Leslie Labowitz's entirely pre-menstrual "Menstruation Waltz". Sober presentations of bodily processes seem unlikely to make for good theatre. The women perform its shows of blood with the hollow indifference to campaigns for and against its cycles that is characteristic of inner organs.

The branching tree of faith

Heiko A. Oberman

JAROSLAV PELIKAN
The Christian Tradition: A history of the development of doctrine
 Volume 4: Reformation of Church and dogma (1300-1700)
 424pp. University of Chicago Press. £25.95.
 0226653765
The Vindication of Tradition
 93pp. Yale University Press. £10.95.
 0300031548

If the first three volumes of Jaroslav Pelikan's *The Christian Tradition* (1971, 1974, 1978) are impressive for their extensive grasp of sources from both East and West, the fourth one, entitled *Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300-1700)*, adds the element of courageous pioneering: there is hardly a time-bomb in the field of Roman Catholic and Protestant tensions which the author does not unearth, defuse or at least temper with. Hence, the past and the present intersect continuously; two stories evolve which, though intimately intertwined, must be disentangled.

First, there is the saga which unfolds from the death of Aquinas and Bonaventure in 1274 through the aftermath of the Reformation and

Counter-Reformation until the emergence of Jansenism in the seventeenth century. In accordance with the author's programme, laid out in the introduction to this multi-volume enterprise, it is not intellectual history, in any modern sense of that word, which we may expect. No effort is made to present the conflicting currents of thought in their political or social context. Rather, as Professor Pelikan insists, "all personal and theological preferences aside", the development of doctrine is presented, and the sources are selected on the basis of their "survival power". This last phrase is not used by the author himself but the concept is, in my view, the implicit point of departure and basis for the decision to lay emphasis upon the peacemaker Nicholas of Cusa instead of the strident William of Ockham, to quote the pastoral Gerson more than the speculative Meister Eckhart and to highlight the pacifist Menno Simons rather than the militant Thomas Muntzer. Above all, this perspective leads to a critique of Reformation thought in general and Martin Luther in particular.

The convoluted first story is well told, with an especially sensitive evocation of the late medieval climate of thought as the setting for the Reformation. Admittedly, there are still vestiges of pre-modern value-judgments—such as the association of nominalism with the con-

cept of an "arbitrary" God, rather than the amazing and therefore inscrutable deity who transcends human understanding. But in no modern handbook is the reader put so closely in touch with primary sources, often extensively quoted from the most recent harvest of critical editions. The doctrinal pluralism of the later Middle Ages is described as a series of waves which, with increasing velocity, batters the rock of the authority of the Church, weakened by the Western Schism (1379-1415).

The careful reader will notice that here Pelikan has already laid the foundation for the pivotal thesis which will shape his second story: the Reformation is presented as the triumph of St Augustine's doctrine of grace over his doctrine of the Church. One part of the Augustinian heritage is thus pitted against the other, destroying the medieval "Augustinian synthesis". "Although the two would not become completely unravelled until the Reformation, we may perhaps see the beginnings of the process here": in the fourteenth-century recovery of the anti-Pelagian Augustine by Thomas Bradwardine and Gregory of Rimini, both of whom pay insufficient attention to the anti-Dionysian emphasis of Augustine on the objectivity of sacramental grace. This focus on the debate about the legacy of Augustine proves singularly advantageous to Pelikan, allowing him to present in one cohesive pattern the issues of justification, predestination and mystical experience as well as the debates about conciliarism and the infallibility of the Church in the fifteenth century. Especially striking is Pelikan's ability to pursue overarching themes while still doing justice to the individual characteristics of the several major and minor authors he considers. He is greatly assisted in this endeavour by a fine, unflinching instinct for quoting crucial passages in such a way as to suggest that his own speculations are modest afterthoughts.

Where there is distortion, it is generally due to necessary abbreviation; where there is error, this is not on account of denominational apologetics or confessional blindfold. Pelikan's fair-mindedness extends beyond Luther to Zwingli, Calvin, the radical reformers, the representatives of the "Catholic Reformation" and the voices of seventeenth-century Orthodoxy. To my knowledge, there is in the present generation no other scholar on either side of the Atlantic who has the industry, intelligence and insight—not to mention the language skills—required for the task of giving such a nuanced and fair presentation of this extended and complex phase in the Christian tradition. I am afraid that it will be a long time before this enterprise is undertaken again.

I say "afraid" advisedly, because there are two serious points I wish to make, both illustrative from one and the same quotation: "doctrinal pluralism came to grief in the fifteenth century—and to tragedy in the sixteenth century—when this [Augustine's] presupposition of Catholic unity itself lost its credibility". In the first place, the Catholic vision of the Church did not lose its "credibility"—all schools, as Pelikan himself amply documents, stress this aspect of the common Creed—but it lost its structural, that is social and political, reality: the Western Schism ushered in the period of two and, after Pisa 1409, even three competing papal jurisdictions, which evoked in turn radical conciliar and papal solutions. My insistence on "reality" instead of "credibility" may seem unjustified: in so far as the author does not pretend to deal with social and political strategies, or distinguish, in quoting one of his favourite authors, Nicholas of Cusa, between a conciliar and a papal phase. To place Pelikan in one line with those eminent historians of Christian thought Adolf von Harnack and Reinhold Seeberg sounds like dust-cover advertising, but is praise, both high and deserved. Nevertheless, the period is past in which the historian might legitimately and sensibly—i.e. realistically—separate his interpretations and evaluations of religious thought from all "worldly" concerns. Pelikan's accomplishment should not, therefore, encourage further imitation.

The other point of criticism concerns the word "tragedy": in the above quotation. Applied to Lutheran or Tridentine orthodoxy, it is an acceptable category of evaluation in light of the evidence presented, particularly in the last third of the book. But how should the ill-concealed doom usually associated with the tragic dimension be applied to the Reformation programme, as presented by Luther and Calvin? The answer to this central question cannot be argued on the basis of the disintegration of the "Augustinian synthesis" laid out in the beginning. After all—admittedly under changed conditions—Luther and Calvin combined, like Augustine, the anti-Pelagian campaign with the anti-Dionysian insistence upon the "objectivity of grace" in confronting the radical reformers.

In most eloquent and erudite form, Pelikan has solved that riddle in his Jefferson Lectures, presented between May and September 1983 and now published under the title *The Vindication of Tradition*. Though a collection of thematically separate lectures, the book clearly constitutes a unified plea that modern society find ways and means to recapture the resources of the past and to overcome its law of the tyranny of the dead: "Tradition is the living faith of the dead, traditionalism is the dead faith of the living." Since the past is operative today, "to be tone-deaf to the tradition is, therefore, to be unable to hear the voices of the past or the present—or of the future".

Individual authors cannot be fully portrayed in such a short book, but they appear as proponents and opponents of that crucial sense of a living tradition so powerful that it leaves only one choice: "to be conscious participants or unconscious victims". Though Pelikan never puts matters so bluntly, the wrong choice was apparently made by the "evangelicalism of the Reformation, the rationalism of the Enlightenment, and the historicism of the nineteenth century"; the right one by John Henry Newman.

Here indeed lies the key to the evaluation of the Reformation as a "tragedy". The author has dedicated one of the most moving Jefferson lectures to Newman's rich—and in his time indeed revolutionary—sense of the past. Pelikan honours him as a pathfinder. Newman did far more than rediscover the concept of tradition; he recovered a vision of the development of faith, a living tree of many branches, some ancient, some new, but all bearing green leaves. The severe but necessary pruning doubtless demanded by Luther's Reformation must accordingly seem to have tragically curtailed the "healthy" growth of the Christian tradition.

Thus, "tragically", in an important book on the epoch of the Reformation, the significance of the Reformation itself is too severely reduced to be fully displayed.

In the know

Henry Chadwick

KURT RUDOLPH
Gnosis: The nature and history of an ancient religion
 Translated by R. McL. Wilson and others
 411pp. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark. £14.95.
 0567093328

From three expert translators (R. McL. Wilson, P. W. Coxon and K. H. Kuhn) we are given an English version, *Gnosis: The nature and history of an ancient religion*, of a standard German work of 1977, written when Kurt Rudolph was still teaching in East Germany. The book contains a mass of good factual information, and provokes controversy only at points of interpretation; eg. Rudolph wants to explain Gnosticism as a form of religion popular among the petty bourgeoisie of Near Eastern towns who found life incomprehensible and baffling, and had no confidence in public life and social order. Such a hypothesis is uncommonly difficult to anchor to any facts. So too is the misty language about gnosis as a general feature of Johannine Christianity. And was gnosis a specific religion? Could one ask at Damascus, in some street not called straight, to be directed to the gnostic assembly hall, at a period prior to the Church's expulsion of such doctrines as sectarian? Hesitancy at these points does not mean that this book is not welcome and important. The author is a high authority on the subject with detailed knowledge of his texts.

Sonata with plumes

Brian Pippard

ROBERT COGAN
New Images of Musical Sound
 177pp. Harvard University Press. £21.95.
 0674615859

The sound of an orchestra reaches our ears as minute and rapid fluctuations of air pressure. Any disc or tape that stores it well enough for acceptable reproduction must record the pressure at least 10,000 times a second—say 10 million items of information in a symphonic movement. Of course what we actually hear is a version which has been processed by ear and brain, and bears virtually no discernible relation to the marks on the disc. In any case, two essentially identical performances, or even the signals picked up by two microphones at the same performance, will appear entirely different at this detailed level of recording. This is only one of many cases where the would-be scientific analyst is faced with a plethora of information, and must abstract what is significant, which may be different according to the intended use. There is always the temptation to use some automatic procedure, whether a sophisticated piece of equipment or an aggregate of points, to reduce the data-stream to a limited set of numbers, and to call the result a scientific analysis. But unless the process corresponds to generally accepted interpretations it is not science at all, but scientism. Thus, there is nothing unscientific (though it may be futile) in subjecting children to certain tests in order to derive a number called IQ—as soon as you claim to measure their intelligence you are descending into scientism.

The spectrum-analyser, which is the equipment Robert Cogan has used in his studies of musical texture to convert a musical performance into a complex graph, demands a brief

explanation. It is best to leave the orchestra for a moment, and start with a single note played by, say, a bassoon. A graph of the pressure variations shows a jagged pattern repeating itself regularly, 262 times a second for middle C. Such a regular pattern can always be analysed mathematically into simple tones (sine waves) at the fundamental frequency of 262 cycles a second and integral multiples (harmonics); indeed, if one arranges for a collection of the sine wave generators to sound all the component frequencies at the right intensity, the result is a steady note having the same timbre as a vibrato-free bassoon. Whatever the ear may send to the brain, the image presented to the consciousness normally ignores the harmonics as separate entities and portrays only the fundamental tone with a characteristic timbre. If, however, one of the sine wave generators is switched off and on, the difference is easily apparent, and the ear can then focus on that particular harmonic and continue for a while to hear it independently of the other tones present. This is an example of a basic fact of audition, that one can pick out and concentrate on a selected element of a complex sound pattern, but only if that element identifies itself by changing. A long-held chord on the full orchestra soon becomes a single rich sound which only a very good musician can analyse into its component instruments, but any child with a moderate ear can be told to look out for the entry of the oboe, and will hear it distinct from whatever hubbub is coming from the rest of the orchestra. The art of concerted, especially contrapuntal, music depends on this physiological gift; the skill of the conductor depends on developing it to an extraordinary degree.

The spectrum-analyser, by contrast, is not designed for any such feat, but for the relatively humdrum process of sorting one or more notes into their components, measuring the intensity of each harmonic, so that every fre-

quency present is recorded. It thus possesses a quite different range of powers from the listening ear, making it useful in musical analysis only in so far as the supplementary information it gives adds to the critical listener's understanding. There is no question it can contribute to the study of musical instruments, helping to improve them or make better models available cheaply. Again to the phonetician and the designer of computer-generated speech it provides an invaluable statement of how the component tones vary in pitch and strength from moment to moment. Each consonant and vowel impresses its own signature on the sound-spectrum chart, and the experienced user can read what was spoken. But that is not easy, and even such an enthusiast as Shaw for recording real speech would have recoiled, I think, from the spectrum-analyser.

From a single note or a short passage of speech to an extended musical work is an ambitious step, especially as the eye has not the ear's skill in picking out starts and stops of individual instruments among the crowd. But Cogan believes that "in spectrum photos, we find the constituent sonic details laid out with an impact that is almost as immediate and direct as the sound they picture" and the bulk of his book consists of analyses of sound spectra to illustrate his point. Many of the examples are of contemporary works which I have neither heard nor could judge as music if I had.

A modernist's party

Ian Kemp

GERALD LEWIS (Editor)
 Michael Tippett: A celebration
 254pp. Tunbridge Wells: Baton Press. £12.95.
 0859361403

The fifty-odd tributes and essays comprising this book—published to celebrate Sir Michael Tippett's eightieth birthday—speak of a composer who inspires affection, gratitude, encouragement, productive thought, the need to find value in things. This is as it should be at a birthday party, where guests will naturally be friends and admirers anxious to pay their proper respects and behave tolerantly towards those of their number afflicted with unctuousness or Dutch courage. If Gerald Lewis has not felt able to admit the uninvited guest who might have added a touch of spice to the proceedings, nor to refuse entry to the tedious, he has all the same artfully dotted the "tributes" from contemporary luminaries across his book as a whole and they are unobtrusive. The best of them—two moving contributions from Robert Tear and Alexander Goehr and two little musical offerings from Jonathan Harvey and John Tavener—are well worth having anyway. The essence of the book is continued in a series of essays occupying over two-thirds of it and covering most of Tippett's output, with special emphasis on works written from the 1960s onwards.

The essays range widely in approach and certainly indicate something of the "scope of present day writing about Tippett" which Lewis refers to in his introduction. A few of them, and bits of others, are amiable waffle. But for the most part they are informative, illuminating or provocative. In the first of these categories, the best are by Raymond Furness (on *The Knot Garden's* connection with the little-known Singpiel, *Lila*, by Goethe), Richard Ellyn Jones (an extended consideration of the mythological background to *The Midsummer Marriage*) and Meirion Bowen (a valuable commentary on the text of *The Mask of Time*). Of the rest, none is likely to become a classic but there are several whose insights (new, nearly new and re-minted) certainly endorse Lewis's claim that the essays will show that "there are many paths yet to explore". They contain fascinating ideas but are tantalizingly underdeveloped, as perhaps was inevitable: given their size.

Thus, Wilfrid Mellers elaborates his interest in Tippett's interest in jazz, without saying much about it; David Matthews concentrates on points of comparison between the finales of Tippett's Second String Quartet and Beethoven's Op 131, without quite enough analytical rigour to suggest more than that Tippett ought to have studied the Beethoven more thoroughly; Nicholas Morris attempts to uncover a Jung-inspired tonal symbolism in *King Priam* and *The Knot Garden* but does not (cannot?) take it far enough to propose anything special; Peter Dennison carefully sketches out the neo-romanticism of Western music since the 1960s, in order to position Tippett somewhere in it, but then leaves him stranded on the sidelines.

Less controversial and more successful are those essays with a clearer focus, such as Paul Driver's on the libretto of *The Knot Garden* and its relationship to *Alce in Wonderland*, and Gerald Lewis's own contribution. He has obviously felt responsible for writing about the works not covered by the other contributors and so he provides a survey from *The Ice Break* onwards. It is none the worse for that and includes an especially illuminating consideration of the structure of the Fourth Symphony.

What, the book will be valued for most, I suspect, are the contributions of Arnold Whittall and Robert F. Jones. They are both concerned with the same problem—how Tippett might be fitted into the mainstream of Western music and not be set aside as an English eccentric. Professor Whittall writes from a historical standpoint. He draws a distinction between the modern and the modernistic: the modern is simply a new way of writing music whose basic aesthetic of resolving contrasts is traditional; modernistic implies a genuinely new approach to musical structure, in which resolution or synthesis of contrasting or contradictory elements is replaced by "symbiosis", namely a balance. To Whittall, Tippett is a bit of both, with the modernist taking on greater significance. He thus has profound points of contact with a genuinely new musical aesthetic, as represented by such figures as Stravinsky, Varèse, Carter and Stockhausen, and sense is made of the fact that while Tippett's musical vocabulary may not seem particularly "advanced", what his music sounds like is eminently new and immediate.

Whittall's thesis, supported by Tippett himself, is persuasive: Jones's approach is analytical. If his use of Schenker to demonstrate a tonal hierarchy in a short passage from *The Heart's Assurance* and of Forte to demonstrate atonality in a shorter passage from the Piano Sonata No 2 seems curiously indifferent to the sound of the music, he puts Cone's theory of stratification in Stravinsky to good use and is prepared to take the trouble to examine what Tippett has written rather than bewail its supposed arbitrariness. The tone of his writing suggests a mind ready to branch out fruitfully on its own.

Tuning the potentiometers

Paul Griffiths

PETER MANNING
Electronic and Computer Music
 211pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £19.50.
 019319188

It is all electronic music now, of course. The unusual experience is to walk into a restaurant and find people there actually playing; even a Salvation Army band in a shopping centre can seem a wonderful escape from a world where music normally reaches us processed, on record, cassette or videotape. To rail against the invasion is as common as it is futile. The more useful response might be to make some creative point out of the new musical resources that electronics make available, and yet the fate of electronic music has been very much like that of television: it has been an avenue of dissemination to a bewildering degree, but hardly at all a means of new creation, except in the sphere of popular music.

This seems to have something to do with the extraordinary greediness of the medium. Nobody expects a new piano sonata to reinvent the instrument, but electronic compositions are accorded respect only when they involve some wholly original technical accomplishment: one thinks of the alternation of orchestra and tape in Varèse's *Déserts*, or the echoing of soprano and recorded voice in Milton Babbitt's *Philomel*, or the shunting yard of recordings put together in Stockhausen's *Telemusik*. And so doubt this need for innovation comes about because electronic music is still, despite its pervasiveness, alien as a vehicle for creative thought. To those of us who know little of electronic music, one rig seems as good as another. Discrimination comes with knowledge.

Peter Manning's book will greatly aid the spread of knowledge in this field. He writes as the man who has been responsible for running the electronic music studio at Durham University since 1973, and as one who is therefore well practised in the art of explaining machinery to music students, who are perhaps not often adepts in the higher technology. What results here is an admirably clear introduction

to the workings, possibilities and limitations of the hardware in its three main phases: that of the "classic studio" where, in the 1950s and 60s, composers cobbled pieces together with the most basic equipment; that of the synthesizer, which had its heyday around 1970 thanks to Emerson, Lake and Palmer and J.S. Bach; and that of the computer, whose aptitude for fine control inspires and irritates composers today. Nothing in Manning's treatment will fox anybody who can change a mains plug, and yet an enlightening amount of information is conveyed. For that reason alone the book must become a standard text for students of electronic music, whether they tune the potentiometers in universities or at home.

Manning's consideration of the music, however, is generally less instructive, though it must be admitted that here he is up against formidable obstacles provided by the medium. Few electronic scores have been printed, and quotation from those few tends to be confusing: this book, though well illustrated by figures and photographs, ignores them entirely. Then again, the seeming aesthetic value of technical novelty leads Manning to deal with compositions as if they were solely exercises in sound synthesis. Most conspicuously, there are six pages on Stockhausen's early *Studien* with barely a thought about the composer's intentions or achievements beyond the technological. Or to take another example, one could wish that the highly informative outline of the RCA Synthesizer were matched by a similarly fruitful introduction to the music made with that machine by Babbitt. It is unfortunate, too, that Manning's enthusiasm should wane after the early 1970s. Stockhausen's *Sixtus*, for instance, is omitted even from the list of recordings.

Other shortcomings may be laid at the door of Manning's publishers, who should certainly have encouraged him to provide footnotes indicating his authority for many fascinating details in his historical sections. There is, too, a misleading statement about Stockhausen's *Hymnen*, whose orchestral version has a properly notated score, but otherwise the book is dense with sound information, enough to make up for its lighter weight of musical insight.

Towards the universal blank

John Pitcher

SANFORD BUDICK

The Dividing Muse: Images of sacred disjunction in Milton's poetry
213pp. Yale University Press. £18.
0300432889

JOHN M. STEADMAN

The Hill and the Labyrinth: Discourse and certitude in Milton and his near-contemporaries
185pp. University of California Press. £23.
0520048776

Milton's Biblical and Classical Imagery

258pp. Duquesne University Press,
600 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15282.
\$23.50.

0820701610

JAMES D. SIMMONS (Editor)

Milton Studies XX
245pp. University of Pittsburgh Press. \$23.95.
0822934973

JAMES H. SIMS and LELAND RYKEN (Editors)
Milton and Scriptural Tradition: The Bible into poetry

212pp. University of Missouri Press; distributed in the UK by Harper and Row. £18.50.
0822040279

ROBERT THOMAS FALLON

Captain or Colonel: The soldier in Milton's life and art
272pp. University of Missouri Press; distributed in the UK by Harper and Row. £32.
0826204473

Just now and again, in the library of books on Milton, there is a miracle in the bookstack. Someone with a *real* idea emerges, who is not put off if this is intractable or difficult to expound. On the evidence of *The Dividing Muse*, Sanford Budick is just such a critic, tenacious and informed, and with a reading of Milton's mind which is authentic because it leads us along the bleak road to the dead end of puritan iconoclasm. These are not, it must be stressed, Budick's terms, nor his historical perspective, nor even his conclusion. For Milton, as Budick sees it, there are a number of primal scenes in each of which a subject chooses, or refuses to divide from what is dearest to it, its object. The exemplary scene is the self-sundering of the Godhead, as the Father divests himself of the object of his love, the Son. But what the Father can give up, his creatures find more difficult to part with. For Eve, delighting in her reflection in the smooth lake, the watery image, her object, "is not something ephemeral", rather it seems "inherently more winning than the truer knowledge won from a constantly dissolving,

constantly reforming consciousness of reality". Eve is in love with herself, anticipating Narcissus, but, even more damning, she is hungry for the vividness, the sensory intactness of the image, the realness of the face in the water. From adoring the object, she regresses to wanting to be an object (which is why she listens to Satan's enticing descriptions of her as the centre of all attention). She and Adam, and Satan, are the victims of their own eyes, and only in the universal blank, or in the extinction of the image, will there be any salvation. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out. The Jesus of *Paradise Regained* knows this, and he knows also that it is in the agony of loss, of self-blinding, that God, the Unseenable One, will make his reunion with fallen mankind.

The poetics of such a grim theology is what interests Budick, and what makes him optimistic about Milton's imagination. He shows with great discretion how the imagery in the prose and verse is as incisive, self-dividing and discriminating as the Logos itself: cutting a space in men's hearts into which the temple of the new dispensation (not an object) is to be set. Headly stuff this, as Budick moves Milton between Cassirer and Heraclitus, Coleridge and Philo of Alexandria, but the authorities are all necessary, and tactfully introduced. Where one divides from Budick, and feels rather brutal in doing so, is in his confidence that in Milton there is a harmony of opposites, a healing of wounds to the eye, an arrival at the New Jerusalem through reintegrative imagery. Significantly, his discussion does not extend to *Samson Agonistes*. For all his persuasiveness, one dark and coarse thought remains: that with a terrible if genuinely Protestant logic, Milton has only advanced from the first phase of the Reformation — breaking church windows and effigies — to a hunt for icons and idolatry in the imagination itself.

Fears of the damage done to the mind by books, in particular literary books and rhetoric, is also one of the subjects of John M. Steadman's *The Hill and the Labyrinth*. The old debates are rehearsed here: seventeenth-century ones — truth against error, logic against rhetoric, science against language — as well as those from the twentieth century. Croll against Jones, literary styles against world views. In places, Professor Steadman, as erudite as ever, wants to lengthen the perspective still further (back through the Schoolmen to the Greeks), but he comes up with little that is unusual or novel. This is a characteristic conclusion:

If the seventeenth century is, in a sense, the watershed between Renaissance civilization (still strongly influenced by medieval conceptions and values) and the modern world, the primary responsibility lies

with new conceptions of scientific methodology rather than with new attitudes toward the nature and function of rhetoric and poetry.

One is prompted to ask, in the face of such caution and platitude, what audience this book is written for, but even more pressing is the question, why was it written at all? If a student of literary forms and ideas has concluded that the languages of science are the decisive ones in seventeenth-century culture, should he not be attempting some analysis of *those*? Then, instead of the present book, we might have had *The Waterclock and the Greene Lyon*, a discussion of how Newton made mechanical toys, then mathematical and observational models, and then began an alchemical hunt, searching for the conjunction between symbolic and scientific discourses. If one really wants to identify the new epistemology, and to set it against a decaying rhetoric, one must begin with its lexicon and grammar, here to be found in notebooks, diaries and experimental methods (which was the new language Bacon advocated, of course). One might even begin to wonder, *contra* Steadman, whether the new philosophy and science were at all distant from the imagination. (Descartes seems to have thought them very close. He took his dreams of November 1619 to be the beginnings of the *scientia mirabilis*.)

Reviewing books, and suggesting others, is always easier than writing them, but still it is fair to say that the effort of producing *The Hill and the Labyrinth*, itself essentially a passive and superannuated review, might have been better directed. What cannot be faulted is Steadman's command of an enormous amount of secondary reading. This is equally true of his other book, *Milton's Biblical and Classical Imagery*, which is a set of nine scholarly essays published between 1958 and 1974. These have been updated, at least in the notes (some of which supply at least a month's reading), and prefaced by a new, long chapter entitled "Sion and Helicon", and another on Milton's Urania. This is the encyclopaedic tradition at its most useful and most daunting — etymologies, conventions, Eve's dream as a witchride, classical pneumatologies, oriental deities against the classical pantheon, and lots of untranslated Latin sources. It is the stuff of commentaries and the foundation of books like Sanford Budick's. Yet one's heart sinks at the remark that classical mythology "owed its very considerable vogue in Renaissance Europe to the fact that it was no longer believed literally and might accordingly be enjoyed as a supreme fiction". The chronology here is suspect (did Dante believe *literally* in Charon and Minos, and for that matter did the Roman poets?), and

perhaps even the imaginative status ascribed to the classics. They say that when you dream in another language, you may be sure that the structure has gone deep, well down below the level of idiom. Steadman seems to think that classical iconography in the Renaissance was *only* idiom, that artists could take it or leave it. But we notice that when Milton has a dream about a dead wife, it is construed as an unsuccessful rescue from the classical underworld. Perhaps the ancient gods and their heathen ways — all to be expunged in Milton's *blank* — were the *lingue* of imaginative experience, not its *parole*.

More theories about how the Renaissance perceived and imagined experience are described by Paul Stevens in "Milton and the Icaric Imagination" in *Milton Studies XX*. Stevens's spade-work is good enough, even if the soil is a little dry and powdery. In essays by other contributors — on Milton's redaction of Genesis, nature in *Comus*, Hayman's illustrations *et al* — there are moderately rich veins, but no major lode. The collection of studies in *Milton and Scriptural Tradition* are from a group of scholars who have elsewhere published substantial and in some cases distinguished books. Certain of the essays are surprisingly slight, and could do with the ballast of scholarship and judgment that John Shawcross shows in his piece on Milton and the covenant of grace. Even less satisfactory is the introduction by Leland Ryken, which claims for the book an allegiance to Harold Bloom and "Intertextual Criticism". Lying down in the same bed as Bloom is always a dangerous affair; you may wake up to find yourself wrestling, not with an angel, but with your critical dad. Milton's misprision of the Bible, misreading the Word for the word, is not something, *pace* Ryken, that these essays venture very far into. When Harold Fisch suggests that the language of Milton's hell is derived from the Book of Job, for instance, it is difficult to see which of Bloom's vessels has been broken. A reading of Satan in terms of Job denying God's creation has fascinating but here unexplored possibilities. There is some, but not much exploration in Robert Thomas Fallon's *Captain or Colonel*, a courteous and innocent book, which pleads for an eclectic approach to literary study (reconciling the schism between biography and critical theory), so that, among other things, the speeches in Pandemonium may be placed in one of their proper contexts: Milton's experience as secretary to the republican war council of the 1650s. But the self-separations of the present literary community — many of which are destructive blanks — will need more than Fallon's good manners to put right.

The literary life

Simon Rae

WILLIAM SCAMMELL

Jouissance

84pp. Harry Chambers/Peterloo. £4.50.
0905291611

Despite William Scammell's use of traditional forms and his strong line in social observation, attempts to compare his work with Philip Larkin's leave out, it seems to me, more than they account for. For a start, Scammell will have no truck with the negative principles — to which Larkin rigorously adhered — underlying (most) Movement poetry ("nobody wants any more poems about philosophers or paintings or novelists or art galleries or mythology or foreign cities"). The very title of this, Scammell's third collection, with its Barthesian overtones, stands as an anti-Movement manifesto. The title poem itself, addressed to Gauguin — "Paul" (to whose "Still Life with Profile of Charles Laval" we are directed by the notes) — ignores most of Larkin's *don'ts* about referring to things your readers may not be familiar with, while the book as a whole is well stocked with exactly the kind of allusion to other writers (artists, philosophers, etc) frequently deplored by Larkin. *Jouissance* is a veritable check-list of impressive — mainly foreign — names, often arranged as lines of verse: "Boulez, Messiaen and Berg"; "Altmann, Truffaut, Olmi, Ford"; "Borges, Prokofiev, Arp, Stevens, Joyce" ("Who's Jorge Luis Borges?").

Similarly, though Scammell is a self-confessed provincial (geographically speaking), his station "Here in the sticks / beyond the Lakes" (that other Cumbria no tourist ever makes), he obviously interprets the "compelling argument" for provincialism in poetry differently from Larkin. In "A Letter from Cumbria", he uses "the sticks" as a vantage point from which to comment on the nation as a whole — "We see England straight / perched high up on a farmer's gate". After a glimpse of

local colour — "The lambs, jump-jetting on all fours / above the fells and Yorkshire Moors" — Scammell launches into a sort of over-view of contemporary "English style", and focuses on an ill-defined representative female:

With pearls and hats she has no truck,
her accent never comes unstuck,
the IUD's her only luck,
y charm; the chains
her mother's mother wore are struck
from all her limbs.

This romps along at a good pace, the Burns metre suiting Scammell's bouncy, chatty, opinionated and personable voice. "Metamorphosis", another poem in a borrowed metre — Byron's *otaviu rima* — is less convincing. Take this, for instance: "London, '61. The birds were singing. / The property boom sent concrete blocks to soar / above the populace, whose ears were ringing / as Stones and Beatles thrashed the summer air / to practise bright new freedoms, known as swinging. . .". It's not just the mis-dating of Beatlemania (Larkin knew when the Beatles' first LP came out) that undermines confidence, nor the rogue Alexandrine and indifferent rhyming that crop up elsewhere in the poem; it's the distinct feeling of the verse not quite making it — the odd constructions ("sent concrete blocks to soar", the clumsy clinching of that third "ing" rhyme ("known as swinging"). As Clive James said somewhere, paraphrasing Yeats, if it looks as though you've worked hard at it, you haven't worked hard enough.

The middle section of the book, "The Literary Life", contains poems recording Scammell's engagement with other writers — "I'm reading Lawrence, warming both hands at / his Penguin orange beard". Lawrence, like most of the authors here, seems to come off second best — "Oh, it does reproach you so, / this Pelman-Prussian braggadocio / by Nietzsche out of Fraser. — Teachers covet / ing sabbaticals and biceps, love it!" Even Arthur Hugh Clough, for whom Scammell expresses a most

unClough-like enthusiasm ("My man's Mr. A. H. Clough") gets ticked off for snobishness. One of the more successful, "The Making of *Modern Love*", is so perhaps because of the nature of its subject: "George needs love. It says so in the books / queuing up his right arm" neatly encapsulates most of what we need to know about Meredith (though Peacock's daughter gets a more sympathetic justification in her own reply to *Modern Love* in Anthony Thwaite's *Victorian Voices*).

Easily the most satisfying poems come in the third section, "Point Blank": poems of real human experience, undistracted for the most part by Scammell's intellectual appetite. Many confront death, but "Ten Miles for a Kiss" is a

celebration of Francis Kilvert, lover of country girls, "whose calling card's a cowslip / tendered to the warm / snout of a larch". The elegy, "Into our Heads", opens with these two fine stanzas:

My neighbour died in his armchair
aged fifty-six. It was Boxing Day.
Nothing to say why then, why there
two shakes after wetting the tea.

Pete dropped baldly on Scafell
walking one minute, dead the next
at an age neither biblical
not glossed by any text.

It is when Scammell's subjects are least "glossed" themselves that he produces his best poetry.

Crossing registers

Lachlan Mackinnon

JOHN WELCH

Out Walking
87pp. Anvil. £4.
0 8546 1164

Out Walking brings together work written since the late 1960s and presents a remarkably cohesive poetic personality with little evidence of development or growth. John Welch can at his worst be slackly sentimental, as in "Biography", where we learn that "Each day the secretary dies / A little, leaving a trail of footprints / Where she goes to water the flowers", or in "Here and There", where Welch invokes "The deep buried sparkle / A child imparts to its days". Longer poems bring out a portentous obscurity. "Grieving Signal", for instance, describes how "Each village / is manicured to a turn and resting / Each in its sep'rate vale", uniting arch poeticism with precision about an invisible landscape. Welch is quoted in the blurb as writing that "the gratuitousness of poetry may constitute its special value", but this playful assertion is belied by the earnest straining after significance which enervates most of these poems. It is with some surprise, then, that one turns to his "XXII Sonnets", which are such simply by having fourteen lines. Their form is reminiscent of Robert Lowell's free sonnets, but this voice is much more restrained in mood, vocabulary and reference. In "So Long", the poet has been "Leaning so long over myself", but finds of his quotidian experience that "This is the dull seed / From which it will germinate, this nothing-at-all, / Sunlight suddenly trapped in the classroom's / High windows, rainwet roads, and in my heart / The Buddhas of a thousand years. Today / As I stand beneath a cold sky, there is one Alsatian / Weaving over these empty, cared-for fields." The Buddhas may be obese with unearned resonance, but otherwise these lines have a persuasive clarity. The sonnets are uneven, but at their best they show us the world and the poet's feelings as the other poems, trapped in a wilful solipsism, do not.

ALEX BARR

Letting In The Carnival
53pp. Harry Chambers/Peterloo. £3.
0905291638

Alex Barr's title poem presents poetry as a circus, a "laboratory o' sights". It stretches its dialect idiom to include birds "turquoise,

DAVID TIPTON
Wars of the Roses
51pp. Rivelin Grapheme. £3.95.
0947612 07 6

David Tipton's self-regard is monolithic and awe-inspiring. *Wars of the Roses* covers a selection of the poet's experiences between 1979 and 1980, and is a journal of the humdrum. Tipton may feel that "The stance should be mocking and sardonic / like Byron's or some such romantic satirist" but his deeper instinct is the best generation credo that "the poem can contain it all and control it if organic / and unrestrained by literary inhibition". It is hard to imagine any inhibition that would stem the relentless tide of trivia on which the poet is borne towards us. In Edinburgh, Tipton lists "Knox and the Calvinists. Mary Queen of Scots in bed with her lover, Bothwell, / and across the city Hearts were losing to Hilberian / while from the ramparts, floodlit in summer, a cold wind through the battlements / *Peru beat Scotland 3-1 in Argentina*," Tish said". Tipton's "illegitimate grandfather . . . / began work at twelve when Queen Victoria was Empress of India, / Gladstone and Disraeli vied for power, the Army was scattered round the Empire" and on and on the grandson goes. When a friend's girlfriend is "having an affair with Sue, the papsinger", Tipton is "reminded of the destructive dialogue in Hemingway's *The Sea Change* / but what can you say to someone in such circumstances?" Nothing, the story rather suggests, but Tipton has little regard for silence.

The blindness of historians

J. C. A. Rathmell

LAURO MARTINES

Society and History in English Renaissance Verse
191pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £17.50.
0631 141154

Lauro Martines has a distinctly low opinion of historians' capacity for interpreting poetry, especially Renaissance poetry. "They hold the common view", he maintains, "that verse is the utterance of fine sentiments in fancy words and so has little to do with reality." Professor Martines, who is himself a historian and the author of a study of Renaissance city states in Italy, does not mince his words: "Historians read verse as if it were prose; they remain oddly oblivious to the fact that poetry not demonstrably political in content may have significant political implications; they are deaf to indirect allusion and incapable of recognizing that a poem may communicate its meaning obliquely, through its style and form. Literal-minded and professionally hidebound creatures that they are, historians entirely fail to recognize that poetry has 'a potential input to make in our ways of reconstructing the past'. They need, in short, to be taught that poetry has a place 'in the repository of historical documentation' as relevant as that of any dusty archival records.

Up until now the science of social literary

analysis, as Martines terms it, has barely got off the ground through lack of any readily available guide to the relevant techniques. "No study now exists", the author asserts, "that tells historians how as historians to read Renaissance verse, nor has anyone outlined a method to assist literary scholars in their search for the traces of society and history in the verse of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries." The trouble with otherwise useful writers such as L. C. Knights, Patrick Crutwell, Christopher Hill, Keith Thomas and Lawrence Stone (whose limited and partial insights Martines generously acknowledges) is that they share the common misapprehension that society is something "out there". They do not see "that it is also in them, in their minds, in all the values and signifying codes, loyalties and censures that go to make and maintain a society".

In a brisk summary of his own position the author advances nine numbered propositions sketching the guide-lines for a method of social literary analysis that will bring coherence and systematization to the hit-and-miss impressionism of previous schools. Technical jargon and references to "the gigantic body of pertinent current theory" are deliberately eschewed as unnecessarily obfuscating (though more advanced readers are advised "to be on the look-out" for commentary in his notes). It turns out in fact that "the overarching vision of social analysis may be described in a single sentence": Martines summarizes it thus: "If the social world is some kind of living whole which

engages all who live in it, and if the poem belongs to a socio-historical world by virtue of the poet's contact with his contemporary readers then however ingenious or fanciful the poem, we must assume that it has relations with the world." The claims Martines stakes out for poetry's relation to reality are, then, not unduly extravagant or disconcertingly visionary. Relations (or "ties" as he prefers to call them) between poetry and historical reality are not to be seen simply in terms of specific and more or less readily identifiable political allusions to contemporary affairs, but rather in terms of the access poetry may give us to the *mentalité* or temper of a given period. The aim of the book is, quite simply, "to present a method of unlocking the poem and getting at the ties".

Any reasonably instructed reader, the author implies, can get the hang of a poem that is explicitly political in intention; it is the ones that have no evident connection with reality (as historians ordinarily understand the term) that provide the real test. Martines offers a brief round-up of the more conventional political themes of Renaissance poetry:

If a poem praises kingship, aristocracy, gentlemanly rural retirement, the rule of the few over the many, the bonds between civil and heavenly hierarchies, or if it heaps scorn on upstarts, outcasts, women and the vulgar multitude, then the text proves a declaration of its ties with the world.

So far, so good. But many ideas cannot serve

as bridges from poem to world; they show no manifest ties with the impinging society. "Manlyest is the key word here. With the courtly sonnet, for instance, you have to "go around the love theme, to its treatment and background" to get at its ties with actual social circumstances. "Much the same would be true", he adds, in a succinct review of other major Renaissance *topoi*, "of any effort to provide a social context for the poetic themes of lust, religious ardour, destructive time, the Golden Age, longing for England's past, and the theme of the upstart versus ancient house."

Martines is a trifle perfunctory in his discussion of some of these matters and his proselytizing enthusiasm occasionally leads him into a brassiness of manner not calculated to endear him, one suspects, to his departmental colleagues. "Though Renaissance poetry is neither a mirror nor a window to its world", Professor Martines characteristically observes, "it drew contemporary experience into an engaged, ment so important and so substantial as to make historians' neglect of it astonishing." It may seem graceless not to be more grateful than one is for the author's spirited defence of the uses of poetry in face of such alleged scepticism and indifference on the part of his fellow-historians, but the immediate utility of the book is limited. It has to be said, by its failure to apply the strategies it advocates to the extended discussion of any actual

Michael Hofmann

JOHN FULLER and HOWARD SERGEANT

(Editors)

The Gregory Poems 1983-84

94pp. Edinburgh: Salamander Press. £2.95.
0907540589

Initiation, a sound investment policy and a glorious list of past winners have made the Eric Gregory Awards for British poets under thirty a generous, if misleadingly generous, sample of what awaits the fortunate winners. There are precious few instances of poetry "overhauling" prose: but last year, the Gregory Awards (shared, usually, by around four to eight poets) were worth more in total than the Booker Prize. A "major" Gregory is equivalent to the advances on maybe half-a-dozen published volumes. And this for thirty poems that, on the face of it, are unlikely ever to appear together again. One wonders just how many of the poems printed in this anthology — the third — will survive, even for their authors.

Excitement of idea or expression is rather rare in the present collection, which seems to contain mostly dull and well-mannered meditations, grandmotherly and museumish poems about grandmothers and museums. Where something does catch the eye, it is often for the wrong reasons, like Deirdre Shanahan's penchant for transitive intransitive verbs, or Uae St Aubin de Terán beginning numerous sentences with "And", or John Greening, in otherwise pleasing Egyptian poems, having to "resume / from scratch", which is a contradiction in terms. Some of the most forceful writing is from Hilary Davies, but she spoils it with obscurity and poor judgment.

But there are also things to admire. Richard Burns has only one poem here, "Last Post", but that has a nice line in comic half-rhymes, and sudden unexpected depths:

In the West we drink to raise our hopes;
but in the East we drink to raise our
hopes to the level of the East, like Levantine
through a sea of gin. For Englishmen
the West is a land; it has trees
and flowers but is fiction and betrays.

Carol Ann Duffy has the best line in the book, "When things are as natural as this they are at their best". Mick Imlah is already noted as a writer of crotchety, clever and scurrilous poetry; his "The Zoologist's Bath" is included. Jamie McKendrick organizes his reminiscences to fine effect, and Michael O'Neill's short poems clutch their flawed moments to themselves. Bill Smith — "the scummed cup, the thickening grease on the knives" and "the tacky stink of age and withdrawn lives" are the two recurring lines in his villanelle, "The Scummed Cup" — is the odd one out in this company, as his poems actually confront an unpleasant and up-to-date reality. But the most significant writer among these nineteen prizewinners and *prox acci* I take to be Christopher Meredith. In his poems "Sheep" and "Wasps" he writes with freedom and perhaps unfashionable eloquence about alienation and doubt. There is wit, but neither humour nor contrivance in the way his sheep double as the victims of another holocaust:

This, you think, is some photo of an old war. Clothes
ragged, cropped heads, children dazed, calling for
food,
all the thin legs merded with crumpled travel
and eyes indifferent with many deaths.

What We'll Never Know

Spots of Lechner's '5' and '9'
alternated round his face like warpaint
when we talked about my writing. 'One blockbuster
and you'll never have to work again', he told me.
rubbing the red and white markings down to a tan
for drawing room comedy. He opened the window
on to an area where some old overcoats had been left
hanging on railings. 'Look at that!' he whispered,
'The Tramp's Cloakroom. Now there's a subject for you.'
We stared into the night. 'They'll be gone by October',
he said, 'but where to, that's what we'll never know.'

HUGO WILLIAMS

Effecting an entrance

Clive Aslet

TIM MOWL and BRIAN EARNSHAW
Trumpet at a Distant Gate: The lodge as prelude to the country house
237pp. Thames and Hudson/Waterstone. £25.
0947752056

A few years ago a handsome book with colour plates could surely not have been produced on an outlying appendage of country estates, but such has been the post-Girouard boom in country-house publishing that Waterstone have chosen this study of gate lodges as one of two titles to launch a new architectural series. The lodge is an engaging subject since, far from being the "prelude to the country house" which the subtitle of this book suggests, a glimpse of ashlar on a rural road is as near to the main house as many of us may ever get. It is, the authors argue, a distinct building type which has previously gone unsung.

At its best, the lodge contains a great deal of architecture within a little space and this is its architectural interest. It should be an example to our time, since maximum show for minimum outlay is so often what modern domestic clients seek of architects. But all too often these striking but uncouth buildings are undocumented. We are told that Bottle Lodge at Tixall in Staffordshire may have been built in 1575 or could equally be an early nineteenth-century pastiche. One can sympathize with the authors' difficulty in establishing a chronology: even though the book develops some intriguing and not always obvious themes, for instance the lodge as triumphal arch, Greek temple and "Episode in the Italianate", the main lines of development are blurred.

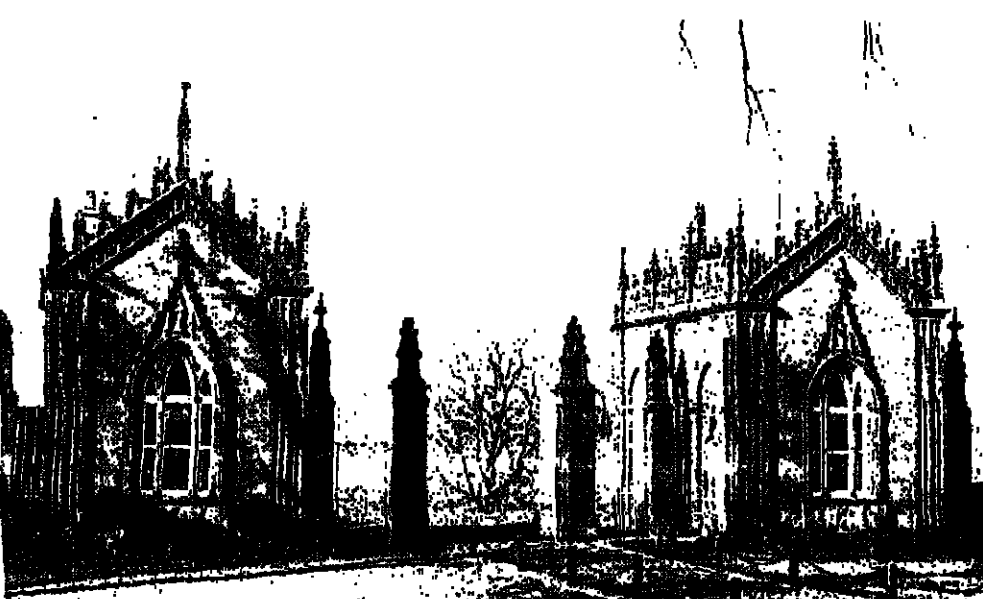
This is particularly evident when the very beginnings of the lodge are described. Why did owners start to build lodges in the 1720s when, as the authors show in an analysis of late seventeenth-century country-house views, they had not been thought necessary in the half-century before? It was not purely a question of distance from the house: none of the tremendous avenues through hunting forests shown in Kniff's *Britannia Illustrata* of 1701 ends in a lodge. Some baroque gardens were very extensive and all those valuable little plants in pots must have been tempting for the thief, but the gates of such gardens remained unguarded. Once raised, however, the question is left in the air – and the hiatus in lodge building in the late seventeenth century makes the suggested evolution from Tudor gate-houses unconvincing.

The strength of *Trumpet at a Distant Gate* is its stylistic description and value judgment. Even with Scotland excluded, the subject is extensive and many unfamiliar lodges are described and illustrated. The authors also write with vigour, even passion (although I would not agree that "the word numinous can be applied without pretentiousness" to any house, Wilkins' *The Grange* not excepted). The weakness is that not enough is said about the way lodges were used and how they worked in relation to the house. Were they for protection, privacy or show? Were they a means of alerting arriving guests that they were entering the park, and should keep their eyes open for Picturesque effects? Lodges were not an un-mixed blessing, at least in later years: the recent book *The Country House Remembered*, edited by Merlin Waterson, recalls how at Jockworth between the wars it was awkward to go out to dinner since you would inevitably have to get one of the three lodge-keepers out of bed on your return. While the text is interlarded with literary references, some little-known, these are not always germane – Winckelmann on the Greek way of carving (esthetics being a case in point. One would have preferred more quotation from architects and owners' letters).

The authors' prejudice against the *collegiate* style does less than justice to the lodge's role in an important aspect of the Picturesque. Unfortunately, too, they take the lodge as a vehicle for working off their hostility to Victorian and most later architecture, which again undercuts the subject. Nesfield's Old English lodge at Regent's Park (not mentioned) and his Queen Anne Revival ones at Kew Gardens and Kinnel Park (respectively not mentioned and not illustrated) were among the earliest

examples of their styles; here the lodge was far more pioneering than it had been in the earlier Greek Revival. The authors make fascinating observations on the accommodation in eighteenth-century lodges: only a bedroom and a living-room were provided lest the extra room were let out to disreputables; the two rooms might be either side of a triumphal arch; lodge-keeping was an occupation for single people as owners did not like the mess of washing lines or their equivalent (sometimes conceded to be picturesque) at the entrance to their parks. But there is nothing on Victorian attitudes to accommodation, morality and family life.

Short shrift is given to the twentieth century, and the mighty lodges at Sennowe in Norfolk (the owner lived in one while the main house was being reconstructed) have been missed. So, too, have lodge innovations such as electrically operated gates. In the 1920s a set was installed at Kings Weston. But not to save labour: there was still a lodge-keeper who emerged to press the button when the owner's Rolls drew up. To my mind that says more about the ethos of lodge-building than simple enumeration can do.



The lodges to Gisburn Park, West Yorkshire. They were designed in about 1800 by their owner, Lord Ribblesdale, and are reproduced from the book reviewed here.

For setting great store by

Andor Gomme

GRAHAM HUGHES
Barns of Rural Britain
192pp. Herbert. £12.95.
0906969360

Barns are vital to almost all developed agriculture, and therefore of great social and historical interest; moreover many of them are very beautiful. Yet apparently this is the first ever book on the barns of Britain – of England really, for Scotland (which has far more than Graham Hughes allows) and Wales get the merest nods in passing. The subject deserves better than *Barns of Rural Britain*.

Barns, as a functionally and architecturally distinct building type, need clear definition, followed by a historical and descriptive analysis which goes beyond saying that the interior is "spacious and splendid" and the wind-brices are "elegant" and which relates design and building to specific use, nature and method of farming, ownership, building materials and date. Scraps on all these can be found in Hughes's book but they never add up to a considered discussion of why and how barns took their various forms. Such a discussion should naturally lead to an examination of construction; in particular the timber roofs of the great medieval barns are of exceptional architectural interest and importance: in scale they often approach or may even exceed that of a cathedral nave; and they are much more visible and allow the principles of major medieval carpentry to be closely studied; very large crucks too can be on view as they seldom are in occupied houses.

Hughes offers a survey chapter on construction, but his terminology is black, suggesting patchy understanding. The point at Middle Littleton, near Worcester, is called "unusual with double timber frame" and is illustrated

Building from above

Harry Gordon Slade

ROBERT J. NAISMITH
Buildings of the Scottish Countryside
224pp. Gollancz. £12.95.
0575 033835

Even when allowance has been made for regional differences in details, buildings in the countryside of Scotland show a remarkable degree of homogeneity. This amounts to an expression of a unified national style to an extent that is not found in England. That this is so is amply illustrated in this book, though why it is so is largely ignored; as is the equally important point that while there survive in Scotland a great variety of vernacular building methods, these were applied to buildings which were not in themselves vernacular in style.

Before the final defeat of the Jacobite threat in 1746 and the agricultural revolution of the 1750s, substantial building outside the burghs was largely confined to the homes of the more well-to-do classes. In the burghs most of the houses of the same classes harked back to the

seventeenth century or earlier. The homes of the urban and rural poor were of the roughest and meanest description. There was no tradition of sound peasant or yeoman housing like that of the south. In this Scotland was more nearly akin to Ireland than England, and contemporary writers frequently commented on the squalid squalor of the homes of even relatively prosperous workers until well into the nineteenth century. When the time came for the improvements of the mid-eighteenth century there was no strong native tradition in sound rural building to follow. What was done by enlightened magnates and lairds, and then copied gradually throughout the country, was therefore a breaking of new ground. This new kind of rural building was introduced, even when it was not imposed, from above, and was a watering-down of a polite, formal and, to a large extent, alien tradition. It gave the builders a common vocabulary; one which would take on varying regional accents depending on materials available, the local climate, the economic and social base of the area, and the competence of those builders. It would also be influenced by the fashions and skills prevailing in the nearest towns, and by the books available in the libraries of the neighbouring big houses. The influence of these books is very much underestimated – in most cases they are not even known – but the new style came too suddenly and too fully formed to be the spontaneous expression of a native genius.

That this vocabulary is widespread and has produced a distinctively national and recognizable version of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century style prevailing in the British Isles, would always seem to have been perfectly apparent. Now, with the aid of a sample survey of 23,500 buildings and the "inexorable procedures of the computer", the Countryside Commission and Robert J. Naismith have set out to prove it.

Had they been content to rely on a greater number of the splendid photographs, and Mr Naismith's excellent and even more informative drawings, with which this book is illustrated, all would have been well, for they prove the theory of a national style with regional variants. Unfortunately 23,500 undated samples, "unaffected by social or economic bias", have been fed into a computer, and they demand a text. So much information has been amassed that it cannot be digested. It becomes almost impossible to separate the trivial from the important, or the self-evident from the unusual. It is impossible to escape the suspicion that much of the editing was done by the computer as well. How else can one account for such gems as "Some would like to imagine the builders provided a convenient plinth course projection beyond the face of the wall to give a vestigial cornice in deference to the classical style"; or "Pittenweem shows a handsome 3 1/2-storey type of early tenement house with a 'Gutch' tympan gable, the margins round the Dutch-pattern windows being unusually prominent. Spencefield Farm is built round a cattle court." Prose like this does not make for easy reading, nor does the frequent separation of illustration from text: the croft of Auchallater is shown on page 13, but there is no reference to it until page 187. The keys to the detail drawings, which are not numbered in with the photographic illustrations, are complicated and take some time to master.

The main weakness of the book is, however, its deliberate and unchronological concentration on the architectural appearance of the buildings shown, a procedure which has led to the exclusion of plans. In most cases this is not crucial, but in explanation of the forms of houses the omission is serious. The appearance of the double-fronted plan (the plan with its room on either side of the entry), with its capacity for infinite expansion and contraction, is the point from which all late elevational development springs. It is as basic to the understanding of the appearance of Scottish houses, as is the plan of the urban terrace house to an understanding of much English housing.

In spite of these reservations this book is an important addition to the understanding of traditional Scottish buildings of the past 180 years. One cannot work – and the word is used advisedly – through it without being conscious of the quality and number of these surviving buildings, or that, despite the efforts of the

In-flight reading

John Buxton

CHRISTOPHER M. PERRINS and ALEX L.A. MIDDLETON
The Encyclopedia of Birds
447pp. Allen and Unwin. £25.
004500338

This is Volume Three in Unwin's Animal Library and follows the two earlier volumes on Mammals which were generally acclaimed on publication. The two editors have done a very professional job in selecting the authors of the various articles and in seeing that these reach a high standard throughout and do not conflict. Christopher M. Perrins, the successor to two famous ornithologists, W. B. Alexander and David Lack, as Director of the Edward Grey Institute at Oxford, and Alex L. A. Middleton, from the University of Guelph in Canada (whence current efforts to save the Monk Seal from extermination are directed), command respect as editors. Perhaps Dr Middleton's influence is to be seen in the transatlantic spelling and vocabulary (fall for autumn, band for ring, murre preferred to guillemot), which surprisingly prevail in a book printed in Spain for an English publisher; or perhaps the publisher expects sales to be for the most part not on this side of the ocean.

An encyclopaedia is defined in COD as "book giving information on all branches of knowledge or of one subject, usu. arranged alphabetically". This book is arranged taxonomically, although, as Dr Perrins notes, there is at present no simple agreement on the classification of birds, and studies now being undertaken seem likely to necessitate revision. But since these are not yet complete the Wetmore order, which is familiar to all serious ornithologists, has been used. Apart from two introductory essays by Perrins, "Notes on Classification" and "What is a Bird?", there are no articles on such subjects as flight, respiration, vision, migration etc., and to find references to these one is directed by the index to various families where these subjects are treated. Each article treats of a single "family" (not in the strict taxonomic sense) – tinamous, auks, swifts, tits – or of a group of families: birds of prey, gulls, terns, skuas, thrushes and their allies. Inevitably in a class which contains (on Perrins's reckoning) 8,805 species, some will receive more attention than others: there are twenty-two auks and 1,394 "thrushes".

Nevertheless this book contains much new information: the marbled murrelet of the

Canadian Pacific coast nests "on the moss- and lichen-covered branches of large coniferous trees"; the whale-headed stork in hot weather "pours beakfuls of water over the eggs to cool them"; turacos (here treated with cuckoos and hoatzin) which form the only family restricted to Africa, have two pigments, green and red (probably derived from copper) which are found in no other birds; and an African grey parrot "is able to combine 'human' vocalizations to identify, request or refuse more than 50 different items, even items which were not included as part of his original training schedule". He even said "No!" when he had had enough. (The only entry in the index under "intelligence" refers to the article on Crows.)

Each article is prefaced by a summary giving numbers of species, distribution, habitat, plumage, voice, nest, food and so on. There are numerous drawings and coloured illustrations, and the book is plentifully illustrated with incomparable colour photographs. These have been selected to show birds living their lives: flying, swimming, walking, feeding, fighting, building their nests, feeding chicks, displaying, bathing, collecting water and so on. None of them looks posed: the birds seem oblivious of the photographer. The photographs match the text: all are of the highest quality. Yet the book is priced much below what one might have feared, and on every count it deserves success.

Apian ways

Dorothy Galton

ROGER A. MORSE and TED HOOPER (Editors)
The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Beekeeping
432pp. Poole: Blandford. £15.95.
0 7137 1624 X

The publishers are to be congratulated on producing at a reasonable price this handsome volume with its splendid illustrations in black-and-white and in colour. It is a collective work, edited by an American Professor of Apiculture and a former Lecturer in Apiculture and Essex County Beekeeping Officer. There is a list of contributors whose articles appear over their initials; but much of the information has evidently been provided by the editors themselves, particularly from America. Every possible subject connected with honey-bees and bee-keeping (excluding bumble and other



The lammergeier, or bearded vulture, reproduced from The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Life Sciences (432p. £25. Cambridge University Press. 0521 256968).

solitary bees) is covered in language as simple as the subject allows, with some Americanisms to disconcert the British readers (for example, "court" for "suite"). An index helps the reader to find particular subjects if they cannot be found in the alphabetical text: "eyes" are thus excellently described under "Vision of the honeybee". There is also a glossary of terms, and a few short biographies of eminent bee-men and bee-women.

It is surprising to find the Polish *barc* (pronounced "barch") used (p169) for "tree hole": is this word familiar to English-speaking beekeepers? It is stated (p170) that "bortniks" is the term for tree beekeeping in Russia". This is not so: *bortnik* is the tree beeman himself, *bortnichesvo* the activity. This form of beekeeping was widespread in northern Russia, not just "on the border of Russia and Poland". The Bashkir bee is mentioned (p331) but not that tree beekeeping is still practised in Bashkiria on a reserve, for historical reasons. In the article "Sounds made by the honeybee" reference could have been made to articles by Professor Es'kov available in English from the International Bee Research Association, and under "Propolis" there might have been a reference to Poprayko's work on its chemical composition, also available in English from IBRA. It is sad to see an almost complete neglect of beekeeping in the Soviet Union, especially in view of that country's lead in world honey production and the fact that a large part of this production comes from amateur beekeepers, who have, like Americans and others, their beekeeping associations.

The practical and scientific information is copiously illustrated: for example, the dimensions of the modern hive, extractors, the bee's life cycle, and pests such as *Braula coeca* and *Varroa jacobsoni*. Coloured illustrations show these in action and also the effect of other pests such as European and American foul brood, chalkbrood and the wax moth.

A recent interest in the bee world has been beekeeping in tropical countries, here described under "Tropics, honey bees in". I regret, however, that American/European methods of keeping bees in standing hives with frames are out of the much more interesting old-established native ways which can be adapted for modern production as in Ghana and Kenya.

The *Encyclopedia* will answer practically every question the amateur or specialist may ask, and it can be recommended as replacement for all existing books on the subject written for readers using modern methods of beekeeping. Its drawback for practical purposes is its weight and format; it is not a book to slip into the pocket for use in the apiary.

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